



President Thomas G. Masaryk

A SHORT HISTORY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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WITH A FOREWORD BY

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FOREWORD

THE WAR produced great changes in the map of Europe. It brought about the collapse of great empires and in their place it gave rise to a number of new states of which Czechoslovakia is one. The Czechoslovak Republic which thus entered the comity of European States as a fully accredited member, has behind it a long record of independent existence which was temporarily suspended in the seventeenth century by its forcible incorporation into the Hapsburg realm. During the post war years Czechoslovakia has justified this restoration of its former self by reason of its stability in a political, economic, and social respect. Beyond its frontiers its name now stands for something clear and definite and is established with a set of characteristics unmistakably its own. Of these democracy both in home affairs and in foreign policy is perhaps the strongest. This democracy has deep historical roots and when Czechoslovakia once more became a free country it did not need to create any special system of statecraft because this was something which it had already produced in the past. As a result the post war policy of Czechoslovakia has been remarkably free from uncertainty and vague experiment. From this may be inferred how important it is for those who desire a closer acquaintance with that country and its present-day problems, to study its history, which to a large extent will help the student to understand contemporary Central Europe.

Here we have the history of a nation which as early as the seventh century A.D. established its first State, adopted Christianity in the same century and thus became identified with the civilization of Western Europe. In the following four centuries it developed its own art and literature both secular and religious. Under the influence of the ideas of Wycliffe, it became a centre in which the movement aiming at religious freedom developed during the fifteenth century. In the resulting struggle to achieve this ideal the Czech nation lost its independence, and the three centuries which it then passed beneath a foreign yoke almost resulted in its complete disappearance. Its resurrection in the early part of the nineteenth century was a unique event in European history. The revival of its language and literature which in due course was followed by its economic and political reorganization

culminated in its struggle for independence during the war, the outcome of which was the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic. .

The description of this long historical development forms the contents of the present volume, which was written by one of the foremost living historians of Czechoslovakia. The need for such a book has long been felt in this country. There are already two excellent histories of Bohemia in English, one by Count Lutzow and the other by C. E. Maurice, but the former of these traces the destinies of the Czech nation to the beginning of the Great War, while the scope of the latter reaches to the end of 1918. Dr. Krofta's book, however, is continued almost to the present day and it devotes equal attention to both the Czech and Slovak branches of the nation. Although the book is concise and thus particularly useful to those readers who wish to acquaint themselves with the essentials of the subject, it embodies the results of the latest historical research. It is distinguished also by the clarity of style and impartiality of view, and all these qualities will no doubt recommend the book to the English reader. It will, I am sure, do much to make the Czechoslovak nation better known in this country and thus promote the cause of international understanding.

J. G. MASARYK.

*Czechoslovak Minister
in London.*

London, 1st March, 1935.

CHAPTER I

The Beginnings of the State and the Introduction of Christianity

Up to 1000 A D

TO THE great majority of people throughout the world Czechoslovakia seems to be a newly formed state which came into existence only after the Great War. It presents to them the appearance of having been somewhat artificially constituted by the amalgamation of some parts of former Hungary (Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia) with the so-called historical Bohemian Lands (Bohemia, Moravia and a portion of Silesia) which, after having at one time composed the old Kingdom of Bohemia, so well known to the civilized world of its day, were at a later date incorporated in the empire of the Austrian Habsburgs, there practically to lose their identity. Yet the appearance of Czechoslovakia on the world's stage in 1918 was in substance but the return to a state of affairs with which history had begun on her territories more than a thousand years previously. The Slav tribes who at that time settled within these territories seemed indeed, closely related to one another as they were, predestined to amalgamate into a single nation and state, and it was in fact in such a direction that their early development tended.

These Slav forefathers of the Czechoslovak nation of today, who were settled in portions at least of the present territories of Czechoslovakia perhaps as early as the second century, and who by the seventh cen-

ture had secured entire possession of its main parts, were for some time in subjection to the Avars to whom they paid heavy tributes and rendered military service, being oppressed by them in various ways. In the seventh century, however, round about the years 623-624, these Slavs succeeded in shaking off the yoke of the Avars. Their leader in this achievement was a Frankish merchant of the name of Samo who united the liberated Slavs in the first big West-Slav state. This state, the frontiers of which cannot today be determined with certainty, collapsed on the death of Samo, about 658. At the close of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth centuries, the Slavs in Bohemia and Moravia came under the sway of Charlemagne, and in the course of the ninth century both they and the Slav inhabitants of present-day Slovakia appear fully in the light of history. From the neighboring Frankish Empire Christianity was introduced and spread among them. Somewhere between the years 824 and 836, Pribina, a prince in Western Slovakia, had a Christian church built at his seat, the Castle of Nitra, and consecrated by the Archbishop of Salzburg, though he himself was still a pagan. In 845, fourteen Czech chiefs or princes were baptized at Ratisbon, but it was Moravia that at this period led the way in development. As early as the first half of the ninth century a united state had arisen in Moravia, the first ruler of which, Prince Mojmir, is mentioned in the year 830. His dominions probably included not only Moravia itself but also the northern part of present-day Austria, while between 833 and 836 he added to them the Slovak principality of Pribina with the Castle of Nitra. Mojmir's successor Rostislav, himself a Christian, called

to Moravia from Constantinople in the year 863 the brothers Cyril and Methodius, Greek priests and natives of Salonica who were well acquainted with the various Slav dialects. To the people, among whom Christianity had hitherto been spread by German priests, they were to interpret the teachings of Christ in the vernacular. Through the efforts of the two brothers, who brought with them to Moravia an alphabet designed by themselves to meet the needs of the Slav tongues as well as Slav translations of a number of service books, not only Moravia and Western Slovakia but also Bohemia was permanently won for the Christian faith.

The Moravian Empire reached the summit of its expansion under the powerful Prince Svatopluk (870 to 894), who so extended his borders that in addition to Moravia itself, with a considerable portion of present-day Austria and the whole of Western Slovakia they included also Bohemia and the territories to the north inhabited by the Lusatian Serbs as far as the rivers Saal and Oder. There was only a loose connection, however, between some parts of this realm and its center, Moravia itself. Bohemia in particular, while acknowledging the supreme power of Svatopluk, had princes of her own. A common church organization would have provided a powerful means of cementing together all the different parts of Svatopluk's realm. The foundation of such an organization was indeed laid when Methodius was appointed Moravian archbishop by the Holy See in the year 880, and there were subordinated to him two newly instituted bishoprics in Svatopluk's territories, one of them being at Nitra in Slovakia. Disputes, however, between Archbishop

Methodius and German priests, who were opposed to Slav services and accused the Archbishop of adhering to the heresies of the Byzantine Church, marred the consolidation and permanency of this church organization. On the death of Methodius, 885, Slav services were suppressed by order of the Pope and with the consent of Svatopluk, German and Frankish priests of the Latin rite dominated the field throughout Svatopluk's domains. The Great Moravian realm of Svatopluk did not, however, long outlive its founder. On his death, in 894, Bohemia detached itself, and shortly afterwards, in the early years of the tenth century, Svatopluk's realm, weakened by internal dissensions, succumbed to the invasions of the barbarian Magyars, who, about the year 895, had settled in the interior of the later Hungary.

The collapse of the Great Moravian Empire frustrated for more than a thousand years the union of all the Slav tribes then settled on the territories of present-day Czechoslovakia. The eastern tribes, inhabiting the territories of present-day Slovakia, who in time coalesced with the young Hungarian state till at long last in our own day they returned to the original and natural community with their brethren in Bohemia and Moravia, were cut off from the trend toward union. Even to the history of the Slavs of Bohemia and Moravia the fall of the Great Moravian Empire gave a new direction. The center of gravity passed from Moravia to Bohemia. A political and cultural center for the state that was being born—no longer a Moravian or Moravian-Slovak state but a Bohemian State—arose in Prague, the seat of the old princely house of the Přemyslides. All the vacillation between

West and East which had so seriously weakened the realm of Svatopluk soon ceased in this new state. Without hesitation the young Bohemian State entered into close political relations with the Frankish Empire. It did not, it is true, become directly part and parcel of its administrative organism, but, while maintaining internal independence, submitted to the overlordship of that empire. Thus was the Czech nation permanently attached also from the cultural point of view to the sphere of Western European Christendom, and it was Bohemia's neighbor, Germany, that was long the intermediary in her of that culture.

With the extinction of the Moravian archbishopric and the two bishoprics subordinated to it vanished the independent church organization of the Czechoslovak tribes, and Bohemia and Moravia came under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the neighboring Bavarian bishops. The use of the Slav language in the church services was soon entirely displaced by Latin, which secured exclusive dominion in the life of the church as well as in literature and in all legal matters. All church institutions subsequently came to Bohemia solely from the West and at the outset only through Germany. Western models, at first introduced almost exclusively through Germany, had also a dominant influence on the further development of constitutional and social order, on education and art in the Bohemian Lands. This complete association of the Czech nation and state with the neighboring West, represented at first by Germany alone, an association sufficiently justified by geographical position, was not, of course, without serious dangers for the nation's political and cultural independence, but at the same time it provided

the best defense against the menace of being forcibly swallowed up by that powerful neighbor, and in the end contributed largely to the material and intellectual development of the Czechs.

From the beginning of the tenth century the Bohemian State—which at first covered no large portion of Bohemia proper—grew steadily in area and political consolidation, and flourished in the cultural sphere. Christianity and Christian civilization rapidly advanced through the piety and zeal of the princely house. In the young Prince Václav (Wenceslas), whose overzealous Christianity brought him a martyr's death in 929, the Czechs had their first great national saint—a shining example of a Christian ruler distinguished not only for manly valor but also for his devotion to the Christian ideals of right and justice. In the eyes of the Christian world of that day St. Václav became the first representative of the Czech nation in the concert of the civilized nations of the Christian West.

In the same century, during the reigns of Václav's successors, Boleslav I (929-967) and Boleslav II (967-999), all the Czech tribes submitted to the power of the Prague princes, thus consolidating the internal unity and strength of the Bohemian State to such an extent that it became possible to extend its dominion far beyond the frontiers of Bohemia. It would seem that in the latter half of the century Moravia and Western Slovakia were united to Bohemia, and that the whole of these territories were held by the Bohemian State to the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century. The sway of the Bohemian princes at this epoch certainly extended, for some time at least, beyond those limits as far as Upper Silesia

and the region of Cracow. This territorial expansion was accompanied by a further advance in the life of the church in Bohemia. By the foundation of the bishopric of Prague, 973-974, the Bohemian State secured a diocese of its own, subordinated, of course, to the Metropolitan at Mayence, and this diocese included not merely Bohemia but also the extensive territories stretching eastward as far as Cracow, including without doubt Moravia and the Nitra district of Slovakia. At this period there arose in Bohemia the first monasteries, and Christian learning, striking ever deeper roots, produced now its first literary fruits (legends), bearing witness to the notable level of culture which prevailed at least in some classes of the nation. In the tenth century, too, the century of St Václav, Bohemia had passed from the stage of passive acceptance of Christian civilization to active participation in the work of spreading the faith among other nations. Through the marriage of one of the Polish princes Mieczysław, to Doubrava, daughter of the Bohemian prince Boleslav, in 965 a powerful impulse was given by Prague to the acceptance of Christianity by the kindred Poles. The second Bishop of Prague, St Vojtěch (Adalbert), a Czech and scion of the princely house of the Slavniks, close friend of the German Emperor Otho III and enthusiastic adherent of the reform movement of Cluny, not only found a martyr's death, 997, while preaching the gospel to the pagan Prussians, but had a substantial share in the spread of Christianity and the establishment of independent church organizations in Poland and in Hungary. At Hoł zdno, where the remains of the saint were buried, there was established the first Polish

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archbishopric, and the first archbishop was Vojtěch's brother, or relative, Radim-Gaudentius. Similarly the see of Ostrihom (Gran) in Hungary found its first archbishop in the devoted companion and foster-son of Vojtěch who changed his original Czech name of Radlo into the cloister name of Anastasius or Astrik. Thus Bohemia, at a moment when she had only just received the faith, contributed substantially to providing Poland and Hungary with independent church organizations such as she herself did not secure until the fourteenth century.

CHAPTER II

Princes of the Přemysl Dynasty *Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*

THE splendid position which the young Bohemian State had secured for itself in Europe in the tenth century was not permanent. It had been, as we have seen, a real bulwark and center of Western Christianity in Central Europe, but it lost the greater part of this significance when Christianity became firmly established in Poland and Hungary and those two countries advanced in political power. On the very verge of the tenth and eleventh centuries Poland deprived the weakened Bohemia not only of Cracow but also of Moravia with Western Slovakia. Moravia was, it is true, reunited for good with Bohemia before long, but Western Slovakia was taken possession of by the Magyars and became a permanent part of their state. The temporary dominion of the Bohemian prince Břetislav I (1034-1055) over Cracow and Hnězdno in Poland brought about no expansion of the Bohemian State in those directions, for the German emperor, Henry III, compelled Bohemia by force of arms to relinquish those conquests. At the same time there took place a full renewal of the dependence of Bohemia as a fief of the German Empire, a dependence that had been somewhat shaken in the preceding years. From that time on the Bohemian rulers made no attempt to deny the feudal sovereignty of the German Empire, and fulfilled their duties—tributes and participation in military ex-

peditions—unquestioningly, maintaining on the whole harmony and friendship with the emperors. They extended their power not by struggles against the empire, but by valuable services rendered to its rulers.

For the considerable help given to the Emperor Henry IV in his struggles with the Saxons and with the papacy—the investiture dispute, Břetislav's son, Vratislav II (1061–1092) received from the Emperor not only the royal crown for his own person, but also the territories of Budyšín (Bautzen) and Žhořelec (Görlitz), the main part of the later Upper Lusatia. At the beginning of the twelfth century—for the first time in 1114—Bohemian princes are found holding the office of imperial cupbearer—a dignity which subsequently became hereditary and procured for the Bohemian princes and kings a steadily growing influence in the affairs of the empire. In the latter half of this century, Prince Vladislav II (1140–1173), who gave the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa great assistance in his wars—in 1158 he marched with a large army into Italy and there helped the Emperor subdue the rebellious towns of Northern Italy and took part with great distinction in the siege of Milan, received in that same year for himself and his successors to the Bohemian throne the right to wear the royal crown. To Bohemia there was also once again attached the territory of Budyšín which had for a considerable number of years previously been severed from it and now remained for nearly a hundred years a part of the Bohemian State. The nucleus of this state was, of course, Bohemia itself to which at that time the district of Cheb did not belong, while, on the other hand, it included Kladsko

(Glatz) and Žitava (Zittau) on the north and the district of Vitorazsko on the south, as well as Moravia to which pertained the greater part of the district of Opava, subsequently attached to Silesia.

The sovereign power over this state was hereditary in the Přemysl dynasty, but as there existed no definite rules of succession, serious disputes as to the right to the throne ensued among the members of the dynasty. These disputes often swept the country for years at a time, accompanied by every form of confusion and violence. At the same time, of course, they gave the German monarchs—who usually did no more than merely confirm the prince chosen by the Czechs by granting him Bohemia to hold in fief—a welcome opportunity of interfering in the affairs of the Czechs, and procured them ultimately considerable influence in the choice of successors to the Bohemian throne. Under the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in particular, this interference in Bohemian affairs went to serious lengths. In settling the rival claims of two of the Přemyslides in 1182 to the Bohemian throne, Barbarossa allotted Bohemia to one of them and Moravia to the other in such a manner that Moravia was to be an imperial principality independent of Bohemia and subordinate directly to the Emperor. Soon afterwards, 1187, Barbarossa acknowledged the Bishop of Prague as a prince of the empire directly subordinate to the Emperor. But this weakening—indeed, mutilation—of the sovereignty of Bohemia did not last long. A favorable turn of affairs came as early as the end of the twelfth century when the disputes among the Přemyslides as to the right of succession came to an end and simultaneously the power of the German emperors declined.

The feudal dependence of Bohemia upon the empire in no way applied to internal administration or to internal conditions generally in the Bohemian State. Not being restricted by the superior authority of the empire, the power of the Bohemian princes over their Bohemian dominions was practically unlimited. The prince himself decided upon war or peace, he was the supreme judge in the land, he could demand from all the people labor, villeinage services, tributes and taxes according to his own will and requirements; he owned large estates and regarded himself as the lord of all unoccupied land, deciding freely as to its disposal. In the execution of his powers the prince relied upon his court and upon the holders of the princely castles who in his name governed the surrounding population. The members of the court and the holders of the castles were naturally wholly dependent on the will of the ruler. It was only by degrees that from their ranks a higher nobility of officials developed, while from the ranks of those who performed personal military service (on horse) developed the lower nobility of warriors—the knights. But these nobles, especially the higher grade, were as yet no established social class and possessed no rights which would limit the power of the prince. The remainder of the population was composed, on the one hand, of peasants and small farmers, originally freemen, and, on the other hand, of slaves consisting mainly of prisoners taken in war or persons condemned to loss of liberty. While, however, toward the close of the twelfth century the one-time freemen came for the most part under subjection to various secular and religious masters, the slaves who were largely employed as agricultural laborers and artisans rose to a position

of greater freedom, though they still remained dependents

The clergy constituted a special class, though not so sharply differentiated from the rest of the population as they were to be at a later date. Their numbers increased as Christianity spread and more churches were erected. The bishopric of Prague, which had been founded as early as the tenth century, was about a century later (probably in 1063) joined by another see, that of Olomouc. To the two oldest monasteries of the Benedictine Order which had been founded in Bohemia late in the tenth century numerous others were added in the eleventh and twelfth centuries first of the Benedictine Order, and later, from the middle of the twelfth century on, largely of the Premonstratensian and Cistercian. These monasteries with the extensive estates pertaining to them were not only centers of spiritual culture but also fulfilled an important economic mission by seeing to the cultivation of land that had hitherto lain waste or was covered with forest. All the church institutions and the clergy without exception were in strict subjection to the secular power, especially that of the princes. The prince had a decisive voice in the appointment of bishops and abbots, while the clergy in charge of the churches and chapels attached to the princely castles were regarded as mere officials of the prince. In the same way, the churches founded by other secular authorities were regarded, together with any property attached to them, as belonging to their founder and his heirs who could at will appoint and dismiss the clergy in charge of them.

The clergy, and indeed all the priests who were not members of a religious order, were as a rule at this

period married men and had no special position in the sphere either of public administration or of the courts. Attempts to emancipate the Bohemian Church from the oppressive dependence upon the secular power and its all too close connection with secular life were made, it is true, from the time of St. Vojtěch, but up to the end of the twelfth century without much success. Celibacy for the clergy was being introduced as early as the twelfth century, but did not become the rule till the thirteenth century. In the second half of the twelfth century the leading church institutions, the bishoprics of Prague and Olomouc in particular, secured for the people settled on their estates certain alleviations in respect of public burdens and a partial exemption from the jurisdiction of the courts of the castles, but it was not until the thirteenth century that their privileged position in these matters was fully developed and confirmed.

In the Bohemian State, just as in other countries, the clergy were throughout the whole of this period the main, indeed, the sole, agents and promoters of education. All the literary relics of the epoch, which are in Latin, are the work of ecclesiastics. The most important of these relics is the first coherent record of Bohemian history—the *Chronicle* of Kosmas, Dean of Prague, who died in 1125. The plastic arts, too, developed in the closest possible connection with the life of the church of that day, and were at the same time entirely dominated by the models and the influences of neighboring Germany. All together there were many Germans among the Bohemian clergy, who came or were called over from Germany and attained high office. The majority of the Bishops of Prague were

chosen from their ranks. The members of the various orders, especially those of the Premonstratensian and Cistercian monasteries founded from the twelfth century onwards, were at first almost exclusively German. Individual Germans also appeared at the court, a result of the marriages of Czech princes of Bohemia with German princesses. Finally, German merchants used to come to Bohemia at that time to trade, and here and there they settled down permanently in the environs of the more important princely castles. The German merchants who had thus settled below the Castle of Prague were, as early as the reign of King Vratislav (1061-1092), granted a certain measure of autonomy and a privileged position in respect of the courts of law. In the second half of the twelfth century Germans began to settle en masse on the estates of the new Cistercian and Premonstratensian monasteries where they were entrusted with the cultivation of the soil. It was not, however, till the thirteenth century that the many-sided and permanent effects of this mass immigration of Germans to the Bohemian Lands began to manifest themselves to the full.

CHAPTER III

Kings of the Přemysl Dynasty

Thirteenth Century

EVEN before the end of the twelfth century the princely power and the strength of the Bohemian State were consolidated by the fact that the disputes for the throne among the members of the Přemysl dynasty had ceased. In the year 1197 the two surviving candidates for the throne, the sons of King Vladislav I, arrived at an agreement whereby Přemysl Otakar I (1197–1230) became Prince of Bohemia while Vladislav became Margrave of Moravia. Simultaneously, Moravia and the bishopric of Prague were restored to their former relations to Bohemia, and the split in the Bohemian State caused by the policy of Frederick Barbarossa was brought to an end. The protracted disputes of that day concerning the German throne gave Přemysl an opportunity of securing some notable successes for himself and his country. As early as 1198, one of the two elected German kings—Philip of Swabia—raised Bohemia once more to the rank of a kingdom, a step that was later solemnly confirmed by Frederick II's Golden Bull of the year 1212. At the same time the ancient right of the Czechs to elect their own ruler was acknowledged, while the right of the Bohemian kings to investiture in respect of the bishops of their kingdom was likewise acknowledged and their duties toward the empire considerably reduced. These duties owed by the Bohemian kings now continued to decline while

their rights steadily increased. From the close of the twelfth century onwards the kings of Bohemia participated in outstanding measure in the election of the German kings, and in the thirteenth century they were already included among the seven Electors, thus securing not only the electoral right but also an increased influence in the affairs of the empire.

The raising of Bohemia to the permanent dignity of a kingdom commencing with the reign of Přemysl Otakar I encouraged the kings to put forward systematic efforts at the territorial expansion of the Bohemian State. Their attentions were first directed to the neighboring Austria. The marriage ties which in the reign of Václav I (1230-1253) united the Bohemian royal dynasty with the ducal house of the Babenbergs in Austria were a powerful support for the Přemyslides in their endeavors to secure the Babenberg succession when it became vacant on the death in 1246 of the last Babenberg, Duke Frederick the Brave. At the invitation of a section of the Austrian nobles and supported by the clergy, Přemysl Otakar II, the son of Václav, invaded Austria in 1251 and seized the larger part of the country. His most serious rival there was Bela, King of Hungary, who had taken possession of the greater part of Styria. Přemysl Otakar II (1253-1278), who had in the meantime succeeded to the Bohemian throne, in 1260 compelled Bela by force of arms to yield up the whole of Styria. Nine years later, the duchy of Carinthia, which he inherited, was added to Přemysl's dominions. Přemysl's dominion thus attained considerable dimensions. Besides Bohemia, to which Přemysl had in 1266 added the district of Cheb at the expense of Germany, and Moravia, his

domains comprised the major part of the subsequent territories of the Habsburg dynasty—Austria, Styria, Carinthia and Carniola. The power of the Bohemian king, however, extended still farther southwards. Being acknowledged as captain-general of the Patriarchate of Aquilea, Přemysl II extended the frontiers of his dominions as far as the Adriatic Sea.

This great Přemyslide's schemes of conquest, however, extended still further. The aim of a crusade which he undertook in 1255 against the pagan Prussians was to carry help to the Order of German Knights and thus to win the favor of the Holy See. From this expedition the Bohemian king secured only a moral benefit: the town which was founded for the purpose of consolidating the power of the Order in the territories newly subjected to it was called Königsberg in his honor. A second crusade which King Přemysl undertook twelve years later, 1267, was designed to extend his dominion far to the north. Lithuania, then as yet pagan, was with some of the neighboring territories to be won over to Christianity, at the same time to be placed under the sovereignty of the Bohemian king, and to become a portion of the archdiocese that was to be constituted and placed in charge of the Bishop of Olomouc who was to be raised to archiepiscopal rank. The failure of the expedition to Lithuania brought naturally this ambitious plan to naught.

Failure also attended Přemysl's effort to round off his Bohemian and Alpine dominions by taking Western Slovakia and the territory of old Pannonia from Hungary. During the confusion which arose in Hungary after the death of King Bela in 1270, Přemysl twice—1271 and 1273—conquered Western Slovakia, the

second time with a piece of Pannonia included, but he was unable to retain his hold upon these territories.

The rise of the great empire of Přemysl II had been made possible by the disturbed conditions prevailing in Germany, where there was no generally recognized ruler. The existence of Přemysl's realm could have become permanent had the Bohemian king been successful in securing the throne of the German—Holy Roman—Empire. The idea of bestowing the German crown on the King of Bohemia had cropped up as early as 1255, and he himself made efforts in this direction, probably after the death of William of Holland in 1256, and certainly after the death of Richard of Cornwall in 1272, but in vain. In the year 1273 Rudolf of Habsburg was elected King of Germany and at once began an endeavor to extend his inconsiderable hereditary domains by acquiring the lands which had been attached by Přemysl II to the Bohemian State. Immediately on the election of Rudolf, the German Diet declared Přemysl II deprived of all his fiefs for having failed to receive them within twelve months from the new Roman king, whose election he had of course, refused to acknowledge. At the same time he was summoned to appear before the imperial court of justice. When Přemysl failed to obey this summons, he was in 1276 placed under the ban of the empire and war was opened against him. The Bohemian king was forced to surrender Austria, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola and the region of Cheb, and to receive Bohemia and Moravia in fief from Rudolf. A new war soon broke out, however, which ended in the severe defeat and the death of Přemysl at the Battle of Moravské Pole (Marchfeld) in 1278.

Přemysl's son, Václav II (1278-1305), at first made some vain attempts to regain the territories taken from his father by Rudolf of Habsburg, but subsequently turned his attention eastwards. Having become master of the greater part of Poland, he had himself crowned King of Poland at Hnězdno in the year 1290. On the death of the last King of Hungary of the Arpád dynasty a section of the nobility in that country offered the Hungarian crown to the young son of the King of Bohemia, who later succeeded his father as Václav III. This prince was actually crowned and received as king in Buda, the capital, in 1301, but when the conditions in Hungary became unfavorable to him, his father after three years brought him back to Bohemia. A year later King Václav II died, and his son Václav III (1305-1306) wholly renounced his claim to the Hungarian throne. As he was preparing an expedition to Poland to take up the succession to his late father he was assassinated at Olomouc in 1306. With Václav III the dynasty of the Přemyslides in the male line came to an end.

Under the last rulers of this dynasty the internal conditions of the Bohemian Lands underwent many changes of far-reaching importance for the subsequent development of the country. The disintegration of the ancient, simple and uniform order of state and society, which had set in earlier, was consummated in the thirteenth century by the formation and consolidation of a special status for several social classes which in steadily increasing measure relaxed the old order of things. Largely through royal favor, the higher class of nobility secured at this period extensive property rights, became the owners of large landed estates and thus attained a

position of power no longer dependent upon the will of the King. The clergy, too, emancipated themselves more and more from subjection to the secular power and assumed a position of growing independence. The great struggle between Andrew, Bishop of Prague, and King Přemysl I for the liberty of the church ended in 1221 by the clergy being acknowledged in principle as independent of the secular power in spiritual matters, and by the concession of extensive privilege to the ecclesiastical bodies in respect of their secular estates. From this point the independence of the church in matters spiritual and its privileges in secular matters steadily increased.

As the majority of the church institutions had already in the thirteenth century secured the transference to themselves of legal jurisdiction over persons settled on their estates, and as the secular landlords had obtained similar rights, the people living on the church and secular domains had as a result become real subjects of their masters who exercised over them practically every right which in principle pertained to the King and his executive, and also represented them before the King. The legal relation of this class of rural subjects to their masters underwent at this time a change—on the whole a favorable one—through the settlement of Germans in the country and the introduction of the so-called "German Law." The German settlers, or colonists, who migrated en masse to Bohemia and Moravia from the middle of the twelfth century onwards, who settled first on the estates of the monasteries and of the prince, and later on those of the wealthy nobles, were as a rule allotted in advance certain well-defined rights and duties which were summed up under the title of Ger-

man Law (*Burgrecht*). As this German law was more favorable than the old Bohemian law of the land, it quickly spread in Bohemia and Moravia. Not only were new settlements founded on the basis of German law, but also many old communities were placed under it or accommodated to it. In this way the diversity between the various kinds of subjects was eliminated, and they all coalesced into a single class of dependents, paying their masters an annual tribute—rent or interest—from the land which they held of them on hereditary tenancy.

It was not until the first half of the thirteenth century that towns came into existence in Bohemia and Moravia. Most of them sprang up on the scene of foreign settlements, mainly those of German merchants, under the walls of the more important princely castles or on the site of villages favorably situated for trading. Thus the old settlement of German merchants below Prague Castle became one of the fundamental parts of the Prague "Old Town" founded in 1234–1235. This epoch saw also the development of a number of other towns in Bohemia and Moravia out of former trade settlements, and to these were added many more towns, newly founded for the most part by the Bohemian kings—free or royal towns—or by the nobility—subject towns. At the close of the Přemyslide era in Bohemia alone there were some thirty-two royal towns, while Moravia also possessed a number. Although the royal towns enjoyed from the very outset a considerable measure of autonomy, they were, on the other hand, very closely dependent on the King, being, as it were, his private property.

By the emancipation of the nobility and clergy,

together with their dependents, from the jurisdiction of the ancient castles, as well as by the rise of the towns which were not subject to that jurisdiction the domination of the castles was overthrown. In place, therefore, of the considerable number of old districts administered by the princely officials installed at the castles there was introduced a smaller number of larger areas of which the newly founded royal towns formed the centers. Connected with this change was a growth in the importance of the central offices of government which, in the second half of the thirteenth century, became offices of the Province (*Land*) and not of the royal court. The most important of these offices was the Court of Justice of the Province composed of members of the higher grade of nobility. At this court practically from the very outset the rare records of land ownership and nobility were kept known as the *zemské desky*—*Landtafel* similar to the Domesday Book.

Racial conditions were also affected by the great changes in the internal organism of the Bohemian State that occurred under the last Premyslide kings. The numerous Germans who had of old settled here and there in Bohemia and Moravia—in the monasteries, at the court and in the traders' settlements—were reinforced from the middle of the twelfth century by big influxes of new German settlers. Whole regions, especially along the frontiers, up to then covered with dense forest and uncultivated, were occupied by these settlers and for the most part permanently assumed a German character. The first burghers of the Bohemian and Moravian towns were likewise almost exclusively German and gave these towns a German character, which

was sometimes quickly lost but in other cases was preserved till later times. Through other channels, too, the powerful influence of German civilization penetrated at that epoch into the Bohemian State. The court of the Bohemian kings of the thirteenth century was always the resort of German minstrels and generally had a strong German veneer. The nobility, from the end of the twelfth century, adopted in increasing measure not only the customs of Western chivalry in a German garb, but also gave themselves German names after the designations of the castles which were at that time built in great numbers and received German names. By the end of the Přemyslide era, however, there was manifested among the Czech nobility a strong opposition to the growth of German elements and German culture in Bohemia.

In addition to the powerful German influences on the development of the Bohemian State and the general culture of the Bohemian nation, other important influences were felt in the latter part of the Přemyslide era. From the twelfth century onwards the Czechs came into ever closer touch with the more advanced Latin culture which was introduced to Bohemia at that time principally from Italy but also, to a lesser extent, from France. Italian church influences gave an impulse to efforts directed toward the independence and reform of the Bohemian Church, and in their notable reformatory activities the two outstanding sovereigns of the House of Přemysl—Přemysl Otakar II and Václav II—availed themselves largely of the aid of Italian notaries and jurists. Under these two kings the Bohemian State attained a notable level of political, cultural and economic development. The design of Václav II to

found at Prague a university such as then and for long afterwards did not exist in the whole of Central Europe was not realized, and his efforts to give his country a written code of laws likewise failed. On the other hand, a reform of the coinage was successfully carried out by the introduction of a new and heavier coin which, under the name of Prague groat,—*grošchen*,—rapidly found its way into all countries. This reform had been made possible by the then flourishing state of the silver mines at Kutná Hora and the mining of precious metals generally. Bohemia thus became not only the classic land of medieval mining but also one of the wealthiest countries in Europe. This circumstance gave, of course, an impetus to the progress of plastic art, and particularly to architecture in which toward the middle of the thirteenth century the new Gothic style first began to play a rôle.

By virtue of the favorable conditions then prevailing and of the happy policy pursued by the last Přemyslide kings, Bohemia at that time had already attained a prominent place in Central Europe, and in the succeeding epoch this position was not only successfully maintained but the country was raised to an even higher level both in external splendor and in internal expansion and progress.

CHAPTER IV

The Luxembourgs

Fourteenth Century

WHEN the Přemysl dynasty came to an end with the violent death of the last male of that line, King Václav III, on August 4, 1306, the Czechs were faced with the grave task of calling another dynasty to the throne. Although the Golden Bull of Frederick II in 1212 had recognized the right of the Czechs to choose their own king in free election, and though no claim to the throne on the part of a female of the House of Přemysl had ever been conceded, nevertheless in the search for a new occupant for the throne the influence of the German emperors as well as regard for the still surviving Přemyslides of the female line played a certain rôle. Thus, after the brief reign and premature death of the young Rudolf of Habsburg, 1306, and after the expulsion of his successor, Henry of Carinthia (1307-1310), the young son of Henry VII, the German emperor, John of Luxembourg (1310-1346), after he had married Eliška (Elizabeth), daughter of King Václav II, was placed on the Bohemian throne. His reign inaugurated the rule of a new dynasty which subsequently held sway over Bohemia for more than a century. The Luxembourgs were German counts, settled on the frontiers of Germany and France, connected by feudal ties to the French crown and permeated with French culture. Through the election of John's father Henry as King of the Holy Roman Empire, the House of Luxem-

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bourg had, of course, advanced mightily, and it was natural to expect that the Kingdom of Bohemia would profit by the power and splendor of the new dynasty. Henry, however, who attained the dignity of the imperial crown in 1312, died within a year in Italy, and all efforts to secure the Roman throne for his son John definitively failed.

In Bohemia itself King John had no small difficulties to encounter. Immediately after his succession he was obliged to guarantee the Bohemian and Moravian nobility important liberties and privileges which subsequently became the basis of their rights as a class and of their influence upon the state administration. They concerned military service, the payment of taxes, the royal right of escheat in respect of the estates of the nobles, and appointments to the offices of the Provinces. As these offices were henceforth to be granted only to natives of the country, the King could now appoint foreigners only to court dignities and offices—posts of a character personal to the monarch himself. At the beginning of his reign John had been surrounded by the German advisers of his late father, and these, to the great dissatisfaction of the nobility, had had the supreme power in their hands. However, even the dismissal of these German advisers failed to put an end to the conflicts between the King and the nobles. Finally, toward the close of the year 1319, the King left the country, leaving the government in the hands of the nobles. The Kingdom of Bohemia, to which he never returned for any prolonged stay, was henceforth little more to him than an important source of revenue and a powerful basis for the expansion of his dynastic possessions.

John's reign thus became a period of profound decline of royal power within the country, on the one hand, and of a vast extension of the rights and power of the nobility, on the other. At the same time it was a period of splendid external development of the Bohemian State, which manifested itself particularly in the expansion of its territories. For help given to King Ludwig of Bavaria in his struggle for the German throne John obtained from him as an imperial fief the town and region of Cheb, which in the reigns of Přemysl II and Václav II had already been attached to the Kingdom of Bohemia, and in 1322 he took up the reins of government over that area. It did not thereby become at once a direct part of the Kingdom of Bohemia but remained an independent administrative area. From the Bohemian State, however, it was never again separated, and in the course of later centuries merged completely with Bohemia. Two years previously, in 1320, King John had incorporated with the Bohemian State the Budyšin portion of Upper Lusatia which in the years 1158 to 1253 had been united with Bohemia, and in 1324 to 1342 he added the Zhořelec (Görlitz) part. From that date the whole of Upper Lusatia was united to Bohemia for nearly three hundred years. A more significant expansion of the territories of the Bohemian State was accomplished by John by the gradual subjection, from 1324 to 1342, of all the principalities of Silesia, except those of Svídnicko and Javorsko, to his rule. In 1335 Bohemia's sovereignty over Silesia was acknowledged by Casimir, King of Poland, who renounced all claims to Silesia in return for John's abandonment of the title of Polish king, which he had used as the heir of Václav II, and the

rights appertaining to it. King John also spread the fame of Bohemia throughout the world by his three expeditions to Lithuania to aid the Order of German Knights against the pagan Prussians and Lithuanians—1328–1329, 1337 and 1345—and by the temporary conquest of the whole of Western Lombardy and several other North Italian lands—1331–1335. But he failed in an attempt to secure for his dynasty Carinthia and the Tyrol through the marriage of his second son John Henry with the heiress of those two lands. In Carinthia the Bohemian dynasty gained no hold whatsoever, while in the Tyrol its dominion lasted no more than five years, from 1336 to 1341.

Toward the end of his reign, 1344, King John secured from the Pope the elevation of the bishopric of Prague to an archbishopric, to which were subordinated the bishopric of Olomouc and the newly inaugurated bishopric of Litomyšl. With the support of the Holy See, John's eldest son Charles was in the summer of 1346 elected Roman king in opposition to the Emperor Ludwig of Bavaria who had been repudiated by the Curia. Immediately afterwards, however, in August, 1346, King John perished in the Battle of Crécy in France where, with his son Charles and many Bohemian knights, he fought on the side of the French against the English.

To the internal life of the Bohemian State, the territories of which he so largely extended, and which won much fame throughout the world through his exploits, King John paid practically no attention. None the less this life was full of movement and progress. Thanks mainly to John of Dražice, Bishop of Prague, who had been compelled to spend some years

at Avignon when the Pope was located there, French plastic art penetrated to Bohemia and gave rise to a number of eminent works of architecture and painting, especially book illustrations. In the history of Czech literature the reign of John is an important landmark, for from this period date the first literary relics of any considerable size that have been preserved—the *Dalimil Chronicle*, the *Alexandreis*, and various legends, composed in Czech and mostly in verse form.

John's son and successor, Charles IV (1346–1378), who had been brought up at the French court and previous to succeeding to the throne of Bohemia had had the Roman crown bestowed upon him, not only continued with success his father's efforts to extend and consolidate the Bohemian State and to increase its external might and splendor, but with enthusiasm and really paternal care devoted himself to advancing the internal welfare of the country and to extending its material and intellectual interests. He availed himself of his position at the head of the Holy Roman Empire to make a far-reaching adjustment of the Constitution of the Bohemian State. As early as 1348 he proclaimed through several important documents the indissoluble union not only of Moravia but also of Silesia and Upper Lusatia with the Kingdom of Bohemia and their permanent appurtenance to the Bohemian crown. At the same time he laid down a new order of succession to the Bohemian throne, to include not only male but also female heirs of the ruling house. Having confirmed in 1355, as Holy Roman Emperor, the decrees of 1348, he proceeded in 1356 to adjust by a general imperial law—his famous Golden Bull—the relations of the Bohemian crown to the German Em-

pire Without slackening the ancient tie binding Bohemia to the empire, the Golden Bull not only solemnly recognized the King of Bohemia as one of the seven Electors to whom pertained the right to elect the German king, but also allotted to Bohemia the first place above all the imperial Electors and thus above all the principalities of the empire Simultaneously he solemnly recognized and confirmed a number of special rights accruing to the Bohemian State as well as its complete internal independence which at various times previously some of the German kings had endeavored to violate

It was not only by legislation that Charles IV strengthened the unity and integrity of the Bohemian State he also devoted his care to furthering its territorial expansion As early as 1348 he had laid claim to Lower Lusatia, and in 1369-1370 united it with the Bohemian crown, together with the two Silesian principalities of Svídnicko and Javorsko which had not before belonged to it In this way the Bohemian State assumed dimensions which it subsequently maintained up to the Thirty Years' War In addition to this Charles also acquired numerous extensive estates in Germany, partly by purchase and partly through the fact that their owners had become his vassals These domains, which from then on were united with the Bohemian crown as its foreign fiefs, were situated partly in the Upper Palatinate and Meissen, partly in Vogtland and Franconia, they were scattered over the later Kingdom of Saxony as far as Leipzig and over Northern Bavaria as far as Würzburg In 1373 five years before his death, Charles also secured the Margravate of Brandenburg which he granted in fief to his

three sons, and at the request of the Brandenburg Estates solemnly proclaimed it as an inalienable part of the Bohemian crown. The margravate did in fact remain in the hands of the Bohemian dynasty for not quite four decades; in 1411 it passed as a pledge into the possession of Frederick, Burgrave of Nuremberg, of the House of Hohenzollern to become at a later date the cradle of Prussia's power.

An agreement made in 1364 between the royal House of Luxembourg and the ducal House of Habsburg, which had recently extended its Austro-Styrian domains by the addition of Carinthia and the Tyrol, was designed to secure the future expansion of the Bohemian State. According to this agreement the Habsburg dominions just mentioned were, on the extinction of that dynasty, to pass to the House of Luxembourg, while the lands of the Bohemian crown were, on the extinction of the Luxembourg line, to pass to the Dukes of Austria. As the Luxembourg dynasty died out before the House of Habsburg, the agreement concluded in 1364 failed to bring the anticipated gain to the Bohemian State. On the contrary, it became at a later date one of the arguments supporting the claim of the Habsburgs to the throne of Bohemia.

It was with genuine affection that Charles IV devoted his care to the internal conditions of his country. He introduced good order, he gave an impulse to further economic development and he reformed the coinage. In the sphere of intellectual advancement in the Bohemian Lands generally and among the Czechs in particular he gained undying merit by the foundation of the University of Prague in the year 1348. This university, the first and for some time the only one in Central

Europe, attracted great numbers of foreigners to Prague, and made the capital of the Bohemian State, which, as the seat of the head of the Holy Roman Empire, was the political headquarters of the German Empire, an important center of European civilization and culture. The numerous great and costly buildings erected by Charles—churches, castles, the stone bridge at Prague—gave an impulse to the plastic arts in Bohemia. Sculpture and architecture at that epoch reached the high standard attained in Western Europe, while Czech painting, overcoming the previous dependence on foreign models, rose to an outstanding character of its own, so that it would be quite just to speak of a Czech school of painting of that epoch. Czech literature likewise marked a prolific expansion in the reign of Charles IV.

For the church and its institutions the reign of Charles was a period of the most splendid development. By the promotion of Prague to an archiepiscopal see, which Charles had secured before he ascended the throne, the two main territories of the state, Bohemia and Moravia, were emancipated from dependence upon the Archbishop of Mayence, till then the Metropolitan of the Bohemian Church. It was only after that change that church principles secured a complete victory in the matter of the relations between the spiritual and secular powers in the Bohemian Lands, and that all the rights and liberties which had been conceded in principle to the Bohemian Church by Přemysl Otakar I at the close of his big struggle with Bishop Andrew found actual application. The church of that day possessed not only extensive rights but also immense wealth. One-half of the entire area of Bohemia belonged

to the clergy and to ecclesiastical institutions. The vast liberties and immense riches of the church, however, gave rise to abuses of all kinds among the clergy. Energetic measures against these disorders were taken both by Charles and by the first Archbishop of Prague, the learned Arnošt of Pardubice. Their genuine desire to reform the abuses was shown by the support which both King and Archbishop gave to two eminent preachers who inveighed against the immoralities of the Prague burghers and priesthood. These preachers were the Austro-German Conrad Waldhauser, who was called to Prague by the Emperor and spent the years 1362-1369 there, and the Moravian, Jan Milíč of Kroměříž, who, beginning to preach somewhat later, far surpassed Waldhauser in his fame as preacher and in the effect of his work. The mystical exaltation with which his preaching was permeated lured Milíč to proclaim ideas which caused doubts to be entertained as to his orthodoxy. Accused by his opponents, he was summoned to the papal court at Avignon where he died, in 1374, before the hearing of his case was concluded. The moral sentiments and ideas which his activities had evoked among the Czech nation, however, became one of the main sources of the great reformation movement which culminated in the person of John Huss.

The struggle between the Czech and German nationalities for power and supremacy in the country gave this movement a special coloring and frequently coalesced with it. This struggle was in preparation even in the reign of Charles IV through the natural expansion of the Czech element in the towns which had been founded by the German element settled there, and

during the early period following their foundation had been almost entirely dominated by that element, and through the spread of the Czech element at the University of Prague where the subjects of the foreign "nations," Germans in particular, had long had an absolute superiority over the "Czech nation" comprising in the main the students and professors from Bohemia and Moravia, mostly of Czech nationality.

The death of the Emperor Charles IV in 1378 brought to a close an epoch which had seen the culminating point of the power and fame of the medieval Bohemian State, but which marked also the transition to a new era in which the trend and contents of Czech history were not determined by the external fortunes of the state but by a powerful moral and intellectual movement within the nation. The evolution of this movement constitutes the most important characteristic of Czechoslovak history during the reign of Charles's son and successor Václav IV (1378-1419). Under him the external power and splendor of the Bohemian State slowly declined. With the exception of Brandenburg, which was in 1411 definitely severed from the Bohemian crown, the whole dominions as ruled over by Charles IV were preserved intact even though individual portions were temporarily in charge of different members of the royal house and not directly under the King. The German crown, however, was kept by Václav only till 1400, when he was deposed by the dissatisfied Electors. In Bohemia itself the early part of Václav's reign saw a continuance of the splendid expansion of the plastic arts and of Czech literature, but the peace of the land was broken by serious conflicts between the King and the nobility from 1394 to 1403. During these conflicts

the King was twice taken prisoner by the rebellious nobles, confined and compelled to make concessions which greatly restricted the royal power as against the rights of the nobles, but in the end the conflicts fell out in favor of the King.

More serious were the consequences of the King's disputes with ecclesiastical persons and institutions, especially with the Archbishop of Prague. In these disputes the King played the rôle of a determined champion of the royal rights and no less determined opponent of the privileges and claims of the church which infringed upon the royal power. At the same time he suffered—indeed, encouraged—a serious growth of papal influence upon church administration within his territories. This influence was manifested mainly in the fact that the Holy See decided directly upon church dues of every kind which were a source of the most varied revenues for the papal coffers, and that papal tithes were levied upon all ecclesiastical incomes. The influence was in no way beneficial; it merely fed the evils which had originated in the Bohemian Church from the vast wealth of the ecclesiastical institutions and from the privileged position enjoyed by the clergy. King Václav's church policy not only failed to counteract these evils, it directly supported their continuation and growth.

CHAPTER V

The Hussite Period

1400-1471

THE powerful reform movement which had originated in the Czech nation under Charles IV and was directed as a protest against the evils in the church and against the immorality of the clergy and the people, and which had culminated in the eloquence of Milíč, grew in the concluding years of the reign of Václav IV to an amazing force and a historical manifestation of the first order. Under the early successors of Milíč, of whom the most outstanding was the pious South Bohemian knight Thomas of Štítný (who died about 1400) and the learned Matthew of Janov (who died in 1394), the reform movement was able to avoid open rupture with the official church. That rupture came, however, when the adherents of reform among the Czech masters at the University of Prague arose in defense of the writings and doctrines of the English theologian John Wycliffe, who united an inexorable fight against the various disorders in the church with an unusually bold criticism of the very fundamentals of Catholic doctrine. They defended Wycliffe's views against the official authorities of the church who declared them heretical. In the struggle waged around Wycliffe, which began at the University of Prague in 1403, there stood at the head of its Czech champions a man of great moral force and a successful agitator for a reform of Christian life and morals in the spirit of Milíč's teaching. This man

was Master John Huss who since the year 1402 had been in charge of the Bethlehem Chapel, founded twenty years earlier to provide a place of worship in which the gospel could be preached in the Czech tongue. He was the leading Czech professor at the University of Prague, the author of large and important religious works in both Czech and Latin, and a reformer of Czech orthography who greatly improved the Czech literary language and cultivated the popular Czech hymn. On account of his views, at which he had arrived mainly through a study of the works of Wycliffe, Huss was first haled before the ecclesiastical authorities at home, and subsequently tried by the General Council at Constance whither, in November, 1414, he had betaken himself at the request of Sigismund, the Roman king, brother of King Václav IV of Bohemia, armed with a safe-conduct issued by that monarch. After a long, tormenting and shameful imprisonment, interrupted by repeated examinations, and after a public hearing, full of moving incident, before the Council, Huss was condemned on July 6, 1415, as a manifest and confirmed heretic to the loss of his priestly office and handed over to the secular power for punishment. On the same day, by order of King Sigismund, he was burnt at the stake outside the confines of the town on the bank of the Rhine. About a year later, May 30, 1416, the same spot saw the death at the stake of Huss's friend, the learned and eloquent champion of Wycliffe's teachings, Jerome of Prague, who had taken an outstanding part in the issue of the memorable Decree of Kutná Hora in the year 1409 under which the native Czech elements at the University of Prague had secured a decisive supremacy over the foreign elements.

The condemnation of Huss and his death at the stake by no means ended his dispute with the Church of Rome. His cause now became the cause of the Czech nation who with unwonted determination and perseverance entered upon a struggle on its behalf such as history had not previously witnessed nor has since known. Very soon after the death of Huss, the leading nobles and gentry of Bohemia and Moravia issued, on September 2, 1415, a document of solemn protest in his memory, rejecting the verdict of the Council of Constance and declaring themselves ready to defend the word of God according to the teachings of the Master—Huss—whom the Council had condemned as a heretic. This protest which signified a revolt against the then supreme authority of the church aroused a strong echo not only among the Masters of the University of Prague but also among the broad masses of the Czech people both in the towns and in the country. The most powerful bond of union among all those who thus upheld the memory of Huss was the partaking of communion in both kinds which had been introduced during Huss's sojourn at Constance by his friend and fellow worker, Master Jakoubek of Stríbro with Huss's approval. The chalice became the common emblem of these "Hussites." Between the adherents of the chalice and their opponents conflicts ere long broke out which culminated in deeds of violence. The first great storm occurred on July 30, 1419, during a procession of the Prague adherents of the chalice led by the fiery monk Jan of Želivo. When the procession arrived at the New Town Hall, and the councilors declined to liberate from prison a number of persons who had been confined for religious disorders, the angry crowd forced

their way into the town hall and flung the councilors and other detested persons from the high windows of the building into the street, where they were dispatched on the spot. Immediately a new town council was elected. King Václav, who was afraid to do otherwise, gave his approval to this revolt, but died a few days later from the effects of the excitement.

Following his death, the conflict between the Czech nation and the official church became an open rebellion against the sovereign power in the state. Václav's brother and heir to the throne, Sigismund, King of Hungary, who was hostile to the Hussite movement, was not acknowledged by the Czechs as their new monarch, and his attempts to secure the throne by the aid of "crusade" troops ended in heavy defeats. As the endeavors of the Czechs to find another king—Vladislav of Poland, Vitold of Lithuania—failed, Bohemia remained without a ruler from the death of Václav IV to the year 1436, and was under a regency elected by the Diet and chosen from the ranks of the nobles, the gentry and the burgesses. Although the less important provinces of the Bohemian Crown—Silesia and Lusatia—as well as a part of Moravia were for the most part in allegiance to Sigismund and were opposed to Hussitism, the Czech Hussites not only successfully repulsed repeated onslaughts of the crusade armies gathered together from Germany against them—in the summer of 1420 at the Vítkov Heights, Prague; in November, 1420, at Vyšehrad; in 1421 at Žatec; in 1422 near Kutná Hora; in 1426 near Ústí; in 1427 at Tachov, and in 1431 at Domažlice—but were able also to undertake victorious expeditions far beyond the frontiers of the country—to Slovakia which then belonged to Hun-

gary, to Silesia and Lusatia, to Austria and other German lands, and in 1432 even as far as the shores of the Baltic Sea. These imposing triumphs which filled all Europe with amazement and dread were won by the Hussites not merely through their military valor and by the splendid skill of their leaders, of whom the first and most distinguished of all was the blind Jan Žižka, a warrior of remarkable genius and devoted adherent and champion of the "laws of God" (he died in 1424), but also by the strength of their conviction of the righteousness of the cause for which they fought and of their mission to assist that cause to triumph. This conviction, aptly expressed in the circumstance that the Hussites called themselves the "warriors of God," also contributed largely to a powerful growth of the Czech national sentiment and consciousness which had already in the preceding struggles between Czechs and Germans in Bohemia, especially at the university and in the towns, attained an intensity unusual for that age.

The great struggle which the Czech nation now entered upon in the spirit of Huss for the reform of the church and acknowledgment of the pure law of God was from the beginning a struggle in defense of the honor and dignity of the nation against the shameful accusation of heresy, and soon became in the eyes of the nation the fulfillment of a great task for which the Czech people had been specially chosen by God. The Hussite movement, though it drew so much inspiration from foreign sources—the Englishman John Wycliffe was, through Huss and alongside Huss, the main source of its beliefs—and although a number of foreigners also took a distinguished part in it—in the time of Huss the Masters Peter and Nicholas of Dresden, and later the

Englishman Peter Payne,—was thus a movement profoundly and decidedly Czech and national. The effort, however, to help a recognition of the truth to victory also among other nations gave the movement at the same time a universal character and significance.

Among the adherents of the Hussite movement there was never, of course, complete uniformity of views. The moderates, known as the Prague Section, led by the University Masters and faithful on the whole to Huss's teachings, soon after the death of Huss found rivals in the more radical Taborites—whose headquarters were the town of Tábor in South Bohemia—who not only accepted the doctrines of Wycliffe with all their consequences but were also in some matters, partly under the influence of the Waldensians, still more radical than Wycliffe himself. As early as 1417 an attempt was made to check any further split in the Hussite movement by the formulation of principles common to all the adherents of Huss and of the chalice. Three years later these principles were solemnly proclaimed under the title of the "Four Articles of Prague," and attained universal fame and historical significance. They provided in particular for the preaching of the Word of God without let or hindrance, for the administration of communion in both kinds to all believers, for the abolition of the secular power of priests and monks over huge estates and possessions, and for the strict punishment of all mortal sins and all evils contrary to the divine law, including particularly the practice of simony, then widespread in the church. The spreading of novel teachings, often radical in character and at times even eccentric—chiliasm, adamitism, abuse of the sacrament of the altar—did not cease, however,

and the differences between the Prague and Tábor groups did not come to an end. The disputes which from time to time broke out between the two camps were at first suppressed by the sense of common danger threatening both from outside, but in the end matters came to a complete rupture.

Realizing that the opposition of the Czech heretics was not to be broken by force, the Council of Basel, convened in 1431, invited them to negotiate for peace. At a preliminary consultation at Cheb in 1432, the Czechs were promised that the Council would not sit in judgment upon their doctrines but that the discussions would concern open questions which should be judged according to Holy Writ and the practice of the primitive church. This great moral victory strengthened the moderate Hussites in their readiness to make peace with the universal church. They were moreover naturally tired of a protracted and severe struggle and longed for the return of ordered conditions in the land. The opposition of the radical Taborites to this reconciliation was broken in 1434, at the Battle of Lipany. The moderate Hussites, supported by the nobles who favored communion in one kind, gained a decisive victory over the Taborite troops whose general, Žižka's worthy successor, the priest Prokop the Bald, perished on the field of battle. Thereafter the negotiations with the Council were speedily completed. By the Basel "Compacts," solemnly proclaimed in the year 1436, the Czechs were recognized as faithful sons of the church, but apart from communion in both kinds they were conceded a mere shadow of their original demands as embodied in particular in the Four Articles of Prague of the year 1420.

Simultaneously with the proclamation of the Compacts the interregnum in Bohemia came to an end with the acceptance in 1436 of Sigismund of Luxembourg as king. Sigismund, however, died within a year and the Bohemian Estates offered the throne to Albrecht II of Habsburg, the husband of Sigismund's daughter. He, too, died within two years, in 1439, and his son, Ladislav the Posthumous, so called because he was not born until after his father's death, was acknowledged as king only after some time. The actual ruler of the country was soon found in the prominent Hussite noble, George of Poděbrady. Placing himself at the head of the more determined party among the nobles who supported communion in both kinds—the utraquists—and taking possession of Prague, in 1448, he put an end to the anti-Hussite reaction that had set in after the Basel Compacts. He was subsequently elected by the Diet to be regent of the kingdom, 1452, and on the early death of Ladislav, 1457, was placed by the Bohemian Estates upon the royal throne.

King George of Poděbrady (1458–1471), one of the most distinguished of Bohemia's kings, strove successfully to bring about internal peace, to strengthen the ties between the individual provinces that had been loosened by the Hussite revolution, and to restore to the nation its former prestige among the peoples of Europe. In church matters he adhered to the program enunciated in the Basel Compacts of the year 1436, and being himself a devoted supporter of the doctrine of communion in both kinds, upheld the liberties of the utraquist party and supported the free development of its religious organization. This organization had in the meantime become largely stabilized. Since the death

in 1431 of the last pre-Hussite Archbishop of Prague, Kunrát, who had transferred his allegiance to the ultraquists and remained their head, the spiritual head of this party had been the faithful follower of Huss and eloquent preacher, Jan Rokycan. He was elected administrator by the priesthood and had the assistance of a body of priests known as a consistory. During the peace negotiations with the Council of Basel, the Czech estates elected Rokycan as Archbishop of Prague in 1435 but on account of the opposition of the Holy See he never entered upon that office. Indeed, for a time administrators more accommodating to the aims of Rome were installed against him as head of the ultraquist party. It was not until George of Podebrady took Prague in 1448 that Rokycan was generally acknowledged as the one supreme administrator of the party of communion in both kinds—a post which he held till his death in 1471 and one which secured him outstanding influence upon King George's church policy.

As a convinced supporter of the party of communion in both kinds, King George took a determined stand against all who departed from the substantial principles of that party. Among these were, in particular, the Taborites. The Battle of Lipany had dealt a mortal blow at this the most radical among the Hussite parties which, in contradistinction to the Hussites proper, had entirely abandoned the principle of apostolic succession among the priesthood, and by installing their own bishop and an order of priesthood of their own regardless of the question of apostolic succession, had definitely broken with the universal church. The more moderate shade of Taborites—the Orphans—subse-

quently assimilated themselves in practically every respect to the Hussites proper. When, following the express condemnation of the Taborite doctrines by a resolution of the Bohemian Diet in 1444, the remnants of the Taborites refused to abandon them, they were exterminated by the allied parties of communion in both kinds and communion in one kind. Capturing Tábor in 1452, King George put an end to the Taborite rites and compelled the Taborites to assimilate themselves in the matter of church order with the utraquist party. Their bishop perished in prison and the Taborite party, having no priests, gradually died out.

Just at that time there arose a new religious body, differing substantially in many points from the Taborites but having one thing in common with them—the severance of all connection with the Church of Rome. This was the Unity of Bohemian Brethren—*Unitas Fratrum*. The foundation of their doctrine was the bold teaching of a great Hussite thinker, the South Bohemian peasant, Peter Chelčický, who died about the year 1460. Declaring the law of God as contained in Holy Writ to be the sole rule of faith and life, Chelčický demanded with ruthless consistency not only the abolition of all church institutions not compatible with that law and introduced to the church by man, but he also asked that all secular institutions, all social and state orders inconsistent with the law of God should be abolished in the ranks of Christendom. Among Christians, according to Chelčický, there is no place for secular power, for secular offices and courts based upon power, for distinctions between masters and servants, for the use of punishment or for the taking of life in any form, even in war. So long as the world cannot be

without these things, the true Christian must submit to them in patience and humility, but he himself may not take any part in worldly power or in institutions based upon it. It was in the spirit of this teaching that the Unity of Bohemian Brethren, in inaugurating a priesthood of its own in 1467, broke definitively away from the church and from the party of communion in both kinds.

In a genuine effort to bring about complete reconciliation between his people and the Church of Rome, King George opposed the Unity of the Brethren with the same inflexibility with which he had proceeded against the Taborites. When however, despite all this, Pope Pius II in 1462 declared the Compacts invalid, George stood up in defense of them with great resolution. With the design of freeing the Christian States from the control of the Pope he opened negotiations for the formation of a permanent alliance among the leading European rulers which should concern itself with driving the Turks out and of maintaining peace in Europe. This scheme failed and King George was put under ban in 1465 by Pope Paul II, which caused numbers of the nobles supporting the party of communion in one kind to rise against him. These nobles were dissatisfied, moreover, with his rule on account of his resolute defense of the royal rights against the claims of the nobility, and he was also opposed by Matthew, King of Hungary, who had proffered himself as the agent for carrying out the papal ban. King George defended himself successfully against these two foes, but he died in 1471, before the conflict was over, after having caused Vladislav, the young son of the Polish king, to be chosen as his successor.

CHAPTER VI

The Jagellons

1471-1526

THE Jagellon dynasty which thus, on the death of George of Poděbrady, ascended the throne of Bohemia, ruled there for a little over half a century, from 1471 to 1526. The first king of this House, Vladislav II (1471-1516), continued the war with Matthew of Hungary who did not cease to prosecute his claim to the crown of Bohemia, and after a time Vladislav was forced to concede him Moravia, Silesia and Lusatia for life. Only on the death of Matthew in 1490 were these territories reunited with Bohemia. By the election of Vladislav as King of Hungary, the Bohemian State, the unity of which had thus been restored, came into contact with Hungary and therefore with Slovakia with which it was connected by a common past, practically the same language, a kindred culture and by traces of Hussite influence upon internal conditions in Slovakia. Vladislav's son and successor, Louis (1516-1526), who was simultaneously King of Bohemia and of Hungary, perished in an expedition against the Turks at the Battle of Mohács in 1526.

Despite the weak rule of the two Jagellonian kings, the period of their reigns was full of efforts to restore and to consolidate the rule of law which had been shaken by the Hussite revolution. These efforts were not, however, conducted, as in the reign of George of Poděbrady, through a strong royal power but through

the Estates who endeavored to insure and to extend the rights which they had acquired during the disordered conditions prevailing in the fifteenth century. Great changes had meantime taken place in regard to the position of the Estates of the kingdom. The stormy events of the Hussite epoch had deprived the church of the greater part of its secular possessions, the wealthy monasteries had either disappeared or been impoverished, the former oppressive economic dominance of the church over the secular Estates had been broken for all time, and the Estate of the clergy, the prelates, had been deprived of all political significance—so much so that it was not represented in the Bohemian Diet, though it was in that of Moravia. The domains taken from the church had passed mainly into the hands of the higher nobility and became the solid foundation of their great economic and political power. Even the lower order of nobility, the knights, had increased during the Hussite wars in both economic and political importance. It was not until the Hussite wars and later that the lower nobility became an important factor in public life, securing representation in the supreme office of state and the courts of the Province and wield ing a powerful influence in the proceedings of the Diet. Similarly, the Hussite wars brought increased importance to the towns. During those wars the burghesses, especially those of Prague, were at times, so to speak, at the very head of Czech political life, occupied the first places in the Diets and had the deciding voice there. Later, it is true, this picture no longer holds good, for the towns were again thrust by the nobility from a leading position, but even afterwards they continued to enjoy in Bohemia far more rights and thus

more influence on public affairs than did, for example, the towns in the neighboring states of Poland and Hungary. During the Jagellonian era an adjustment was arrived at after long disputes as to the rights of the Estates *inter se* as well as in their relations individually with the Crown. The end of the Jagellonian era presents itself to us, moreover, as a period of the greatest growth in the power of the Estates and of the profoundest decline of the royal power. This period likewise resulted in a substantial deterioration in the legal position of the subject rural population.

Apart from the secondary Provinces of the Bohemian Crown—Silesia and Lusatia—which were largely German in character, and despite their union with Bohemia enjoyed almost complete internal autonomy, the Bohemian State even in the Jagellonian epoch maintained its purely Czech character. The Czechization of the Bohemian towns, founded as we have seen almost exclusively by German immigrants and at first dominated by them, which had made great progress previous to the Hussite wars, was rapidly consummated by the Hussite movement. By the expulsion of the Germans unfavorable to that movement the towns in Bohemia for the most part acquired a Czech character. At the University of Prague, now dominated by the Czech "heretics," there was no longer any place for the Germans. The German element generally was deprived of its privileges in public life and thrust back to a state of almost complete insignificance. This effect of the Hussite movement on racial conditions, which, however, extended but slightly to Moravia, was not lasting. Through the protracted wars and the taste for the profession of warfare which they aroused among

the Czechs, many villages became deserted, and there was no Czech population to fill them. The population of the towns likewise declined; thus the soil was prepared for a new influx of settlers from abroad. As a matter of fact, an *en masse* migration of Germans set in soon after the Hussite wars. These new settlers made their homes in the frontier regions of the north and west of Bohemia which thus became permanently German. Even in the Czech towns as early as the second half of the fifteenth century an influx of German artisans and merchants took place, and with them German servants and workers likewise returned to the towns. Some of the towns it is true, closed their gates to the Germans by the issue of a regulation that no person should be admitted to settle there who did not speak Czech—Plzen, 1500. Latoměřice, 1514—but this measure failed to stop the influx of Germans into Czech towns.

Although the two monarchs of the House of Jagellon were not, like their predecessor George of Poděbrady, adherents of Hussitism, no fundamental change occurred during their reigns in the religious and ecclesiastical conditions in Bohemia. The legal basis of these conditions continued to be represented by the Compacts as agreed upon at the Council of Constance, and the Czechs never ceased to acknowledge their validity even after their abolition by the Pope in 1462. The Bohemian Estates even secured from King Vladislav on his accession a solemn promise that he would not only himself observe the Compacts but would negotiate with the Pope for their confirmation by the Holy See. This confirmation was never secured, but, on the other hand, an arrangement was, through the media-

tion of the King, arrived at between the party adhering to communion in both kinds and that observing communion in only one kind. This arrangement was the memorable Treaty of Kutná Hora concluded in the year 1485. It provided in particular that the Compacts were to be observed by both parties, that each should retain the churches which were in their possession at the accession of King Vladislav, no matter to which party the patron of the church belonged in any particular case, and finally that peasants subject to serfdom in a parish where the church did not pertain to their party might, for their spiritual needs, attend some other church of their own party. The Treaty of Kutná Hora, coupled with the Compacts, long determined the legal position of the two main religious parties in the state and their relations to each other. Laws passed in the Diet recognized the two parties in Bohemia as equal and each possessed of full rights.

This agreement between the two parties did not affect the relations of the Hussite majority of the Czech nation to the Church of Rome. Basing their claim on the Compacts, the Czech Hussites never ceased to regard themselves as faithful sons of the universal church, but they were not recognized as such by the supreme ecclesiastical authorities, and in fact there existed substantial differences between them and the Church of Rome. Outwardly these differences manifested themselves mainly in the circumstance that the Hussites possessed their own, entirely independent, church organization. The Hussite administrators and the consistory bodies which were at the head of the Bohemian Church practicing communion in both kinds—Utraquist Church—were not recognized by the Pope

nor did they conform to his orders. The Bohemian Utraquist Church was thus in reality entirely independent of Rome from which it was divided not merely by different views on ecclesiastical practice, but also by the honor it paid to the memory of Husa, who was revered by the nation and anathematized by the Roman Church, as well as by the fact that it received the communion in both kinds, the cup continuing to be an object of the most profound devotion to the majority of the Czech nation and obstinately denied them by Rome.

At the moment when the Compacts were concluded the leaders of the party of communion in both kinds had displayed the greatest readiness to bring their views into line with those of the universal church and endeavored to make the utmost compromise in respect of their doctrines. Later, however, when hopes of complete reconciliation had vanished, the gulf between them and Rome again widened. The Hussites reverted to the more radical views of the first Hussite period and for a time inclined to the idea of complete severance from Rome. In reality, however, the party of communion in both kinds was never able to bring itself to such a complete rupture with Rome. The ever-repeated and vain efforts to come to terms with the universal church paralyzed the development of the party's religious life and especially that of its church organization.

Particularly unfortunate was the situation of the (Romanist) party of communion in one kind. It had been diminished and impoverished by the upheavals of the Hussite wars, it had no administrative head, since the archiepiscopal see of Prague had not been filled as

in the Hussite days, it possessed no institution which, like the University of Prague in former times, could supply it with a trained priesthood, and thus all its internal organization was in process of disintegration.

Alongside the two religious parties recognized by the law of the land, there had arisen in Bohemia in the second half of the fifteenth century a third party which enjoyed no such legal recognition. This was the Unity of the Brethren—*Unitas Fratrum*, already mentioned. Having definitively renounced connection with the Church of Rome, the Brethren instituted a priesthood and church order of their own. By doing so they dissociated themselves not only from Rome but also from the Utraquist party which never ceased to long for union with the universal church and could not regard with satisfaction the rise of sects calculated to bring about its own disintegration. Since they did not adhere to the Compacts, the Brethren could not appeal thereto for protection. Even under King George they had been persecuted and in the reign of King Vladislav a law passed by the Bohemian Diet had declared them in 1508 as a prohibited confession whose adherents were to be eradicated. Notwithstanding all this, the Unity of Brethren grew not merely in numbers and in the importance of its members, but also in its internal development as a church. This development was facilitated by the fact that before the close of the fifteenth century the Unity had begun to yield up the stern principles of its founders, to make concessions to the practicalities of life, and to reconcile itself with the world generally. This tendency alienated it substantially from its original form and from the spirit of Chelčický, but it secured for it, to the great advantage

of the Czech nation, an opportunity of taking an active part in the intellectual and political life of the nation and of becoming a factor of outstanding importance in that life

The great religious movement which had formed the basic element in Czech history since the days of Huss exercised altogether a most powerful influence upon the intellectual development of the Czech nation. It aroused in the sphere of thought and ideas an activity that was remarkable for both its extent and its profundity. At the outset this activity was concentrated almost exclusively upon religious questions and gave birth in this sphere to works of outstanding quality in contents and in composition some of them particularly the works of Peter Chelčický ranking among the most precious manifestations of the Czech spirit. In addition to religious works Czech literature at this period was enriched by several historical and legal works of great value. In some departments, on the other hand, the Hussite movement held up the intellectual advance of the Czech nation by making difficult, and for a time indeed impossible, the influx of new literary and artistic ideas from abroad which would have provided the Czechs with fruitful inspiration.

In the second half of the fifteenth century, and especially under the two Jagellonian rulers a gradual change took place. Among the intellectual Czech members of the parties of communion in both kinds and communion in one kind—Utraquists and Romanists—there once more appeared prominent adherents of humanism which had begun to find its way into Bohemia as early as the reign of Charles IV. The plastic arts, too, the previous satisfactory progress of which

had for long been thrown back by the upheavals of the Hussite period, and which had suffered serious damage through the destruction of many of the older works of art, took on a new lease of life under the Jagellons. That period saw the rise of a number of notable secular buildings and churches in the later Gothic style, known as the Vladislav Gothic. The destructive blows, too, which the Hussite struggles had dealt the economic system of the country were gradually healed. Under the Jagellons the foundations were laid for the economic development of the towns and the expansion of agriculture, in so far as the big secular landed estates, which had arisen as a result of the Hussite revolutions, were concerned. Toward the close of the Jagellon period mining in Bohemia likewise took on a new lease of life. It was then that at Jáchymov, where new silver mines had been discovered, the new silver coins began to be minted which speedily became so famous throughout the world that their name—Joachimsthaler, Thaler—was used far and wide as a monetary unit, dollar, and in some countries is still in use.

CHAPTER VII

The First Habsburg Period—Prior to the Battle of the White Mountain

1626-1620

ON THE death of Louis, the last Jagellonian king, the House of Habsburg for the third time secured the Bohemian throne, which it was now to hold for almost four centuries. The succession of this dynasty to the crown of Bohemia had been prepared long before through family treaties and dynastic marriages, but Louis's successor, Ferdinand I (1526-1564), the husband of his sister Anne secured the throne not by hereditary right but through free election by the Bohemian Estates. At the moment of his election he was already the ruler of all Austrian territories and shortly afterwards he was also elected King of Hungary. It was only a part of Hungary, however, over which he held actual sway—an area which, besides including almost all Slovakia, was represented merely by a not very wide zone of land along the western frontier of Hungary, Slavonia and Croatia from the Danube to the sea, the whole being of less extent than Bohemia and Moravia and populated for the most part by Slavs. While Slovakia was thus once more united with the Bohemian Lands through the person of a monarch common to both and through the administrative, economic, political and cultural ties which resulted from this connection, the largest part of the rest of Hungary was either in the power of a king elected in opposition to Ferdinand from the ranks of the Hungarian nobility,

John Zápolský, or in possession of the Turks, who in 1541 had even the Hungarian capital Buda in their hands. But Ferdinand's Austrian domains did not continue permanently united with the other two groups of territory. On his death in 1564 they were divided among his three sons. There thus arose three branches of the House of Austria, of which the one that retained the Bohemian and Hungarian crowns held sway only in Upper and Lower Austria, above and below the Ems. It was only therefore the two Austrias which had a ruler in common with Bohemia and a part of Hungary, while all the remaining dominions of the Austrian dynasty were apportioned to other members of that house.

In these circumstances Bohemia was the largest and most important constituent part of the empire founded in 1526, and was the main pillar of its might and strength. The dignity of Elector of the German Empire held by the King of Bohemia had great importance at this stage, for it secured for the Habsburg wearers of the Bohemian Crown a powerful influence in the affairs of the German—Holy Roman—Empire and contributed substantially to the fact that the Austrian Habsburgs were able to secure and retain the imperial German Crown. Ferdinand I himself, who had, together with his brother the Emperor Charles V, become Roman king already in 1531, did not acquire the imperial crown till his brother's death in 1558. From that date onward, however, the imperial German Crown was held almost unbrokenly in conjunction with the crown of Bohemia. The material significance, too, of the Bohemian Crown for the empire of the Austrian Habsburgs was very considerable. For the defense of

Hungary against the Turks and for the war with the Turks generally, the Kingdom of Bohemia alone in the sixteenth century used to pay almost as much in taxation as all the Austrian territories together, and the Bohemian Crown almost twice as much. Hungary at that time paid only about one-seventh of what was paid by the Bohemian Crown for the war against the Turks, though the war was waged mainly for the benefit of Hungary.

Outwardly, the superior position of the Bohemian Crown in the Bohemian-Moravian-Hungarian State was most clearly manifested in the fact that Prague was chosen by Ferdinand's successor, Rudolf II (1583-1612), as a permanent seat of the imperial court, of all the head offices of state and the residence of all the diplomatic representatives accredited to the imperial court. The Austrian and Hungarian Estates themselves did not hesitate to acknowledge the priority of the Bohemian Estates in the common deliberations and struggles of that period. In the sixteenth century they attended without any great hesitancy the joint Diets of the domains of the House of Austria sitting at Prague, and as late as 1615 were ready to attend the general Diet of the lands of the Bohemian Crown convoked at Prague, while the Bohemians on principle declined to participate in Diets and Congresses held outside the frontiers of the Bohemian State.

The concentration of Bohemia, Austria and Hungary in the hands of the Habsburg dynasty in 1526 did not produce at once a united state, but only an alliance of three states, the sole link being the dynasty ruling in common over them all—that is to say, it was merely a personal union. In the election of Ferdinand

as King of Bohemia, moreover, there was no recognition given to hereditary claims of the House of Habsburg to the Bohemian throne. In 1545, however, Ferdinand none the less secured a *post factum* recognition of hereditary right from the Bohemian Estates, and in general no doubts were afterwards cast on the fact of the Bohemian throne being hereditary in the House of Habsburg in the form that the eldest son always succeeded his father. Thus after Ferdinand I his son Maximilian II (1564–1576) succeeded without hitch, and Maximilian's eldest son, Rudolf II (1576–1611), followed. When Rudolf was dethroned by the Estates who were discontented with his régime, the deposition was carried out with the open participation of his brother Matthias, who immediately assumed the place vacated (1611–1619).

Although Bohemia was, as we have seen, united with the Austrias and with Hungary merely through the tie of a common dynasty, the great significance of that tie soon became apparent. Through the influence of the common sovereign not only did the foreign policy of the three groups of the Habsburg dominions become uniform for all, but also in the development of internal affairs there soon appeared various common traits, while in certain matters an actual unification was achieved. In all these countries the monarch shared the power in the state with the Estates as the political representatives of the people, but everywhere he enjoyed considerable rights independent of the Estates.

Thus, in addition to the taxes which he could levy only with the consent of the Estates, the ruler had numerous independent sources of revenue over which the

Estates had no power of decision: revenue from the royal domains and towns, customs dues and tolls, dues paid by the Jews, etc. The unrestricted powers of the ruler were likewise considerable in respect of the administration of justice, the army and in the sphere of foreign politics. For the exercise of these rights the monarchs were able, without regard to the Estates, to set up joint organs and central departments for all their dominions in common, and in fact they did set them up. Thus there arose immediately after the accession of Ferdinand a Privy Council, the functions of which applied mainly to foreign affairs but which also concerned itself with many important matters of internal policy, and a Court Chamber, the supreme department for administering the finances of the Crown in so far as these were not in the hands of the Estates. Later, in 1556, came the Court Army Council. All these were merely consultative organs of the Crown without any special executive powers of their own. They had, it is true, from the outset a considerable influence upon the direction taken by Habsburg policy in the Bohemian Lands, but they took no direct part in government. In time, however, their influence upon Bohemian affairs increased, especially in the reign of Rudolf II, when Prague became the seat of the head offices of state. Their activities brought about, even under the early Habsburgs, at least in some departments a certain unification of the administration of the Bohemian Lands with that of the other territories, notably of the Slovak portion of Hungary.

Attempts were also made to assimilate the different territories in another sphere. As early as the reign of Ferdinand I the Estates of all his dominions were sum-

moned to joint Diets—Parliaments or Congresses, but the Estates attended with unwillingness, and no serious deliberations or resolutions issued from them. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, the Estates themselves took up the idea of joint congresses at which they might arrange for steps to be taken in common against the dynasty, mainly in regard to religious matters. At that time there arose the so-called Confederations of the Estates in which the Estates of the Habsburg dominions associated themselves for the purpose of protecting their common interests. The first Confederation of this type was concluded in 1608 by the Estates of the provinces which, falling away from Rudolf II, rendered allegiance to his brother Matthias—the Estates of Moravia, Austria and Hungary, chiefly of Slovakia. The Estates of Bohemia and Silesia did not join this Confederation but remained faithful to Rudolf. After the deposition of Rudolph, however, when Bohemia and Silesia also accepted Matthias, it was precisely the Bohemians who put forward the most efforts for the formation of a Bohemian-Austrian-Hungarian defensive alliance or confederation. It was not, however, till the Czech rebellion of 1619–1620 that such a conference actually came into being for a short time.

Despite the early attempts toward administrative unity in the sphere of the unrestricted rights of the ruler, and despite the later attempts at bringing the Bohemian Estates into close touch with the Estates of the other Habsburg dominions, the Lands of the Bohemian crown even after 1526 Continued to be an entirely independent state with a constitution of its own, in subjection only to its own king, and they did

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not cease to live their own particular political life, according to their own laws and customs. Indeed, during the reigns of the first Habsburg kings, the unity of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown was not a little strengthened. Ferdinand I in particular succeeded in securing due weight for the Bohemian royal power in the territories of secondary importance, especially Silesia and the two Lusatias, the actual relations of which to Bohemia up to then had been of a somewhat loose character. The supreme central offices for the whole of the Bohemian Lands—of which some had only now been inaugurated, Court of Appeal, while others, particularly the Bohemian Chancellery and the Royal Council, had only now begun to develop as regards their procedure and the extent of their operations—became during the reigns of the first Habsburgs an important and practical link connecting up all the Bohemian Lands. Although at times, especially during the period when the imperial court was in permanent residence at Prague, under Rudolf II, their functions were put in the shade and here and there even paralyzed by the activities of the central offices for all the dominions of the Austrian Habsburgs, the government of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown was nevertheless carried out by the first Bohemian kings of the House of Habsburg on principle solely through the medium of the offices of these Lands.

The internal unity among the Lands of the Bohemian Crown was also furthered by the revival of their common or general Diets. Whereas formerly such Diets were convoked only on extraordinary occasions, they were convened frequently after 1526, mainly for voting means for the defense of the Habsburg dominions

against the Turks. Passing, as they did, measures valid and binding for all the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, these general Diets represented the common assembly of their Estates.

The constitutional character of these lands underwent even after 1526 no fundamental change. Ferdinand I, it is true, did not suffer the Estates to exercise the right of independent decision in the affairs of their country such as they had acquired in the preceding era; he succeeded in restraining all undue exercise of the power of the Estates which had become somewhat too pretentious under his weak predecessors, and thus in restoring equilibrium between the power of the Estates and that of the King, but he did not infringe upon their fundamental rights. Nor did he abuse his triumph over the rebellious Bohemian Estates in 1547 to deprive them of their constitutional rights. Legal relations, then, between the King and the Estates underwent no substantial change even under the first Habsburgs; rather were they stabilized, receiving a more regular, definite and lawful form. The main institutions of the Estates likewise preserved on the whole their former character and significance, and in many cases now for the first time completed their development. At the same time, the efforts of the Habsburg rulers to consolidate and expand the royal power were most insistent and met with no small measure of success. Sometimes, indeed, these efforts were accompanied by acts that plainly betrayed absolutist designs.

The friction to which this gave rise between the Bohemian Estates and their Habsburg rulers, became sometimes fairly acute, but it would hardly have led

to open rupture had there not existed a profound gulf of religious differences between the decidedly Catholic dynasty and the population of the Bohemian Lands who, for the greater part, had long been alienated from Catholicism and the Roman Church, and were just at this period drawing farther and farther away. The cause of this was largely to be found in the penetration of the teachings of Luther into Bohemia and the territories attached to it, a process which had commenced some years before Ferdinand I ascended the Bohemian throne. These teachings not only found many adherents among the German population who till then had been Catholic, but they also aroused a powerful reaction among the Czech Utraquist party and among the members of the Unity of Bohemian Brethren. Lutheranism affected, of course, the Utraquists more powerfully than it did the Brethren. The Brethren had already broken away completely from the universal church, but it was only now under the influence of Lutheranism that the adherents of communion in both kinds found courage to do the same. Lutheranism caused a split, indeed a disintegration, in this group. Against a minority faithful to the existing Hussite order which had become stabilized at the time when the Czech party of communion in both kinds tried to approach most closely to the Church of Rome, there was formed within the party a majority group which, under the impulse given by the Lutheran movement, not only reverted to the original and more decided views of their forefathers, but also accepted some of the new teachings of Luther. Yet even this more decided group in the party of communion in both kinds who thus succumbed to the influence of Lutheranism and whom we

may call neo-calixtines or neo-utraquists, remained within the old party of communion in both kinds as recognized by the laws of the Diet of Bohemia, endeavoring to create a new spirit within the party and to prepare the way for its complete severance from the Roman Church.

This effort, however, met with determined opposition from Ferdinand I. On his accession, Ferdinand had promised the Bohemian Estates that he would uphold the Compacts of Basel. This promise involved the duty of recognizing both the (Catholic) party of communion in one kind and the (Utraquist) party of communion in both kinds in so far as they complied with the Compacts. Ferdinand, however, deduced from his promise also the right and duty not only of taking action against the Unity of Brethren, but also of suppressing everything within the Utraquist party that was not in harmony with the Compacts, that is, of protecting and supporting merely the old Hussites but not of suffering the existence of innovations introduced to the Utraquist party under the influence of Lutheranism, or of other divergences from the Compacts. He checked most decidedly every attempt to establish a Utraquist party independent of Rome; a party that would have been able to include the Unity of Brethren. The success of the effort in question was, moreover, frustrated for long by the complete failure of the revolt against Ferdinand undertaken in common in 1547 by the nobles of the Utraquist party and the Brethren, allured by their sympathies for the Protestant opponents of King Ferdinand I and his brother Charles V in the German Empire. His victory over the rebellious Estates fired Ferdinand to increased

determination in suppressing religious tendencies that were likely to stand in the way of his endeavors to unite the Czechs with the universal church. He persecuted the Brethren to such an extent that they emigrated en masse, he arrogated to himself the power of deciding upon the administration of the Utraquist party, a power which had hitherto been in the hands of the Estates, and he saw to it that the more moderate elements who were ready gradually to give up everything that separated them from Rome should gain the upper hand. At the same time he took steps to raise the Catholic party by degrees from the state of decline into which it had fallen. By the introduction of the Jesuit Order to Bohemia in 1556 and the restoration of the archbishopric of Prague in 1561 the Roman Catholic Church in Bohemia began in the last few years of the reign of Ferdinand I a new life on the lines of the reform principles laid down by the Council of Trent.

The religious policy of the royal court in Bohemia underwent no change even under Ferdinand's successor, Maximilian II, though he lacked the religious decision and the determination as a ruler that distinguished his father. His unremitting opposition to the efforts of the Brethren and the neo-utraquists to secure liberty for both these confessions led these two religious parties finally to join in a common course of action in the struggle for religious freedom. At a conference in 1575 they decided upon a new formulation of articles of faith common to both groups, to which the name of the Bohemian Confession was given. This Bohemian Confession, framed on the model of the Augsburg Confession of the German Lutherans but accommodated in some points to the confession of the

Brethren and the old Hussite traditions of the party of communion in both kinds, was submitted to the King for his approval. Instead of receiving this approval, the Estates obtained merely an oral promise that the King would place no obstacles in the way of the adherents of this Confession in the exercise of their religion. This mere promise gave the adherents of the Bohemian Confession neither full liberty nor equal rights with the Roman Catholics and with the old Hussites; their religion, which could till then have been declared as prohibited, became henceforth a religion on sufferance. The adherents of the Confession thus failed to secure for their faith the significance of a regular church organization. The toleration guaranteed by Maximilian's promise to the neo-utraquists in 1575 did not apply at all to the Brethren who, while adhering to the common Bohemian Confession, had not abandoned their own Confession as members of the Unity of Brethren. On the contrary, they were persecuted in increased measure under Maximilian's successor, Rudolf II. In time, too, the religious policy of this monarch, under the influence of the growing (Catholic) party of communion in one kind, effectively supported by the zealous activities of the papal nuncios, began to be directed even against the actual adherents of the Bohemian Confession—the neo-utraquists.

The growing danger that threatened them united the two parties that in 1575 had agreed upon the Bohemian Confession, to a joint struggle for religious freedom. This struggle culminated at the great Diet of 1609 when the Bohemian Estates, with the noble and cultivated Václav Budovec of Budov at their head, obtained from Rudolf the issue of the famous

charter of religious liberty known as the Letter of Majesty (Majestát). By this charter all those who had adhered to the Bohemian Confession of the year 1575 were granted the right of free exercise of their religion without obstacle of any kind. Simultaneously the Estates of the party of communion in both kinds were given the right to make all appointments to the old Hussite consistories and the university. Together with full religious freedom the adherents of the Bohemian Confession, including also the Brethren, thus secured the opportunity of giving their body a regular church organization and of seeing to the internal development of their church. Rudolf's Letter of Majesty of the year 1609 thus brought liberation from religious restrictions for the great majority of the Czech nation. At the same time it placed the seal on the unification of the two Protestant Czech parties into a single church in which the Brethren maintained a fairly large measure of independence.

Almost simultaneously with the issue of Rudolf's Letter of Majesty, the Estates of Silesia likewise secured a similar charter securing them religious freedom not, of course, in respect of the Bohemian Confession, but of the Augsburg Confession to which the majority of the Silesian nobles adhered, though their forefathers had been among the most determined opponents of the Hussites. The Moravian Estates had previously, mainly through their distinguished leader, the learned Karel of Žerotín, secured a number of religious concessions from Rudolf's brother Matthias whom, dissociating themselves from Rudolf, they had acknowledged as their ruler. All these enforced concessions failed, however, to ameliorate the tension existing

between the majority of the Estates of the Bohemian crown and the Habsburgs, nourished as it was by the difference in religion. On the contrary, the tension soon increased when the Habsburg rule systematically attempted to weaken the effect of those concessions, and with increased determination placed itself at the head of the efforts to restore Roman Catholicism throughout the Bohemian Lands.

The movement set afoot by Luther in Germany and in other European countries also affected the general development of education and culture in the Bohemian Lands. By settling the religious conflict between the Hussite Czechs and the neighboring nations, the movement made it possible for the Czechs to enter into brisker intellectual relations with them. Lutheranism itself had an influence on the intellectual development of the Czech nation, chiefly through Melancthon. The Swiss reformation, too, to the influence of which the theology of the Brethren succumbed in increasing measure, secured for the Czechs access to the sources of a rich culture. Many young Czechs went abroad, and especially the lengthy periods of study spent by young men of the Utraquist party and of the Unity of Brethren at Protestant universities abroad contributed to spreading Western European learning of the Protestant type in Bohemia. The fruitful influence of that learning is apparent in Czech literature which flourished at that period, particularly through the efforts of the Unity of Brethren—Jan Blahoslav, the Kralice Bible. Even at that period the great majority of writings were, of course, of a religious and historical character. On the other hand, the Catholicism which was just then reviving brought the Czech nation again into

touch with the Catholic culture of the Latin countries, the influence of which upon Czech religious life becomes apparent as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the sphere of plastic art Bohemia had still earlier been affected by Latin influences. In the reign of Ferdinand I many buildings had been erected in Bohemia by the King, the nobles and the burgesses, most of them being the work of Italian builders and bearing the seal of the Italian Renaissance. Later, particularly in the reign of Rudolf, Bohemia and especially Prague became the scene of the activities of a great number of Italian and other artists, and the famous Rudolphine collections at Prague Castle brought together unique treasures of the world's art, principally from Italy, Holland, Spain and Germany. Several of the magnificent seats of the powerful noble families also contained rare treasures of the world's art.

The remarkable fund of art treasures thus assembled in the Bohemia of that day could not, of course, have any direct or profound influence upon the broad masses of the Czech nation. Yet the general level of culture attained by the nation at that epoch was certainly high. In the ranks of the nobles and of the burgesses we meet with a large list of names of men of outstanding talents, some of whom produced literary works of great merit: *Karel of Žerotín*, *Václav Budovec*, *William Slavata*, *Paul Stránský*, *Paul Skála of Zhoř*, and others. Indeed, the whole public activity of the Czech nobility and burgesses of that day reveals an unusually high level of education and intellectual maturity. This development was supported by the economic prosperity of the nobles and the towns. The material conditions of the rural population were, despite their growing

dependence upon the masters, comparatively favorable.

Racial conditions in the principal territories of the Bohemian State under the first Habsburg rulers evolved in the direction they had taken in the preceding period. The fresh influx of Germans to Bohemia which had begun soon after the Hussite wars was augmented under the Habsburg dominion. The decline of the former hostility between the Hussite Czechs and their German foes through the influence of the Lutheran reformation opened the way for this influx, which had its main cause in the general economic conditions but also received no small encouragement from the German court. Under the court influence numerous noble families of German origin and language settled in Bohemia. Some of them took root and, associating themselves in the sphere of politics and religion with the Czech nobility, also accommodated themselves to Czech national conditions. Others preserved their distinct character. On the estates of these noble German immigrants the settlement of Germans in towns and villages proceeded apace. None the less, the Czech element maintained an absolute predominance both in the ranks of the then Bohemian and Moravian nobility and among the inhabitants of the towns and of the country. The exclusive use of the Czech language in the Diets, in the offices and courts of justice of Bohemia and Moravia, and indeed, wherever the influence of the Estates extended, was in both Bohemia and Moravia a universally recognized and observed rule. Only the royal offices that were independent of the Estates frequently made use at that time of the German language, especially in their communications with the central

offices of the court. In the German towns and on the estates of the German landowners the official language was, of course, also German. At the beginning of the seventeenth century voices were raised among the Czechs calling attention to the menacing growth of the German element in Bohemia, and the Bohemian Diet of 1615 found it necessary to pass a law for the protection of the Czech tongue, but on the whole there existed at that period no serious conflicts in the Bohemian State touching nationality or language question. In the struggle for religious freedom and for the rights of the Estates the German members of the nobility in Bohemia and Moravia as well as the German nobility in Silesia and in the two Lusatias acted in harmony with the Czech nobility, while the German burghers stood side by side with the Czech burghers.

The great triumph which the united Estates of the Bohemian Lands gained at the close of the reign of Rudolf II over the royal power in securing the Letter of Majesty, the charter of religious freedom, and the confirmation and extension of other rights, was not a lasting one. Neither Rudolf nor Matthias could reconcile himself to the concessions Rudolf made to the Estates, and both did their utmost to weaken their effect. Particularly after Matthias, on the death of Rudolf in 1612, had strengthened his hold upon all the territories which had formerly been his brother's, this tendency became more and more pronounced, taking the form of an aggressive counter-reformation movement. The opposition to the dynasty which this trend of affairs gave rise to among the nobles was intensified by well-founded fears that on the death of Matthias, who had no issue, conditions would become still worse

if the Archduke Ferdinand of Styria were to succeed him, for Ferdinand's violence on behalf of the counter-reformation in the Alpine lands had proved him to be a far more determined opponent of all non-Catholic confessions than was his uncle Matthias. At the request of Matthias, the Archduke was, in 1617, accepted as his successor by the Bohemian Diet, but when the Emperor Matthias a little later had numbers of Protestants imprisoned and ordered the demolition of two churches which had been built on the estates of Catholic nobles in two parishes with German population (Broumov and Hrob), the Bohemian Estates rose in open revolt against him. On May 23, 1618, his two governors—the Czech Catholic nobles William Slavata and George Martinic—were flung by the enraged nobles from the windows of the royal Castle of Prague. A revolutionary government—a directorium of thirty members nominated by the nobility—was set up the next day after this defenestration, and soon placed in the field a considerable army which fought with alternating success against the forces of the Emperor. In the spring of 1619 the Emperor Matthias died, and on August 19 of the same year Ferdinand II, who had previously been accepted as his successor, was deposed by a unanimous resolution passed in a general Diet of all the Bohemian Lands, and a week later the young Prince Frederick of the Palatinate, son-in-law of the English king and head of the Protestant Union of German princes, was elected King in his stead. At the beginning of November, 1619, Frederick was crowned King of Bohemia, but a year later, following the decisive victory gained by Ferdinand over the Czechs at the Battle of the White Mountain, near Prague, November 8, 1620, he was forced to flee from Bohemia.

CHAPTER VIII

After the Battle of the White Mountain

1620-1740

THE Battle of the White Mountain set the seal to the complete failure of the Czech revolt against the Habsburg dynasty. Ferdinand II (1620-1637), who had in the meantime been elected Emperor, was universally acknowledged as King of Bohemia and speedily restored his dominion over all the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, except Lusatia which had been handed over to the Elector of Saxony in return for the help he had rendered Ferdinand.

Ferdinand punished the defeated nobility with relentless cruelty. On June 21, 1621, there perished by the hand of the executioner on a scaffold erected in front of the Old Town Hall at Prague twenty-six nobles and burghers who had been condemned to death for their part in the rebellion. In the course of the years 1622 and 1623 in Bohemia alone 680 persons were condemned to complete or partial loss of their property, and a number of Bohemian towns were likewise deprived either of the whole of their estates or of a part. Even in subsequent years the property of persons, especially burghers, who had left the country for conscience' sake continued to be confiscated. Mass confiscations again occurred following the Saxon invasion of Bohemia in 1631, the estates being seized of all those exiles who had returned to Bohemia with the Saxon army. The estates thus confiscated were, it is true,

presented to the imperial general Albrecht of Valdštejn (Wallenstein) to meet the expenses of the upkeep of his armies, but after the death of this noble—who was a Czech but wholly alienated from his nation and its ideals—in the year 1634, not only these but also his other estates, as well as the estates of his adherents, were once more confiscated. Through all these confiscations a total area equivalent to nearly three-fourths of the entire Kingdom of Bohemia was seized, quite apart from the numerous estates in Moravia and some in Silesia that were confiscated. The royal treasury, however, reaped practically no benefit therefrom, for all was again disposed of either for the maintenance of armies during the Thirty Years' War or—and this chiefly—for rewarding the imperial generals, officers and other secular and spiritual persons, especially foreigners, in Ferdinand's service.

It was not only on the estates and property of the humbled Czechs but also upon their very souls that the merciless hand of the victor of the White Mountain fell. He drove the Protestant preachers from their churches, he forcibly compelled his subjects to abandon the faith of their fathers, and finally by banishing all who declined to embrace Catholicism he did all he could to bring back the heretic Czechs to the bosom of the universal church. Whole masses of Protestants who clung obstinately to their faith escaped religious persecution by emigrating, chiefly to the neighboring Protestant German states but also to Hungary, Poland, Holland and England. It is estimated that in this way there emigrated from Bohemia more than 30,000 families. The loss which the Czech nation thus suffered was the more grievous for the fact that those who left their

native land for conscience' sake were certainly not the worst of its sons, among them was the famous Bishop of the Unity of Brethren, John Amos Comenius. And though they themselves were able in their alien surroundings to preserve their nationality and even to render their nation valuable services from their foreign domicile, their posterity was lost to the nation forever. The favor of being able to emigrate from the country was not, however, granted to all who were unwilling to abandon the faith of their fathers. The villein population was bound to the land and was compelled to remain and *noctua volens* to embrace the Catholic religion. Not everywhere was this process accomplished smoothly, for here and there the peasants rose in revolt, but in the end the indefatigable and violent activity of the counter reformation commissions. Jesuit and other missionaries succeeded in breaking down their opposition. By the beginning of the second half of the seventeenth century the overwhelming majority of the villein peasantry in Bohemia and Moravia had been converted to Catholicism in many cases of course only apparently or superficially so but in time the new faith was adhered to sincerely. Nevertheless, considerable numbers refused to be converted and for generation after generation faithfully preserved in secret the beliefs of their forefathers.

The victory at the White Mountain over the Bohemian Estates enabled Ferdinand II to consolidate and increase the royal power in the Bohemian Lands. The "Renewed Regulations" issued by him on the basis of absolute royal power in 1627 for Bohemia and in 1628 for Moravia were permeated with the sentiment that the Kingdom of Bohemia as a whole had by its

rebellion against its King forfeited all its rights and liberties. It therefore either mercilessly annulled or at least restricted the ancient rights of the Bohemian Estates: it proclaimed the hereditary right of the House of Habsburg to the throne of Bohemia in such a manner that the royal power, immediately on the death of the ruling monarch, passed *ipso facto* to the legal heir to the throne, thus abolishing the old custom of the new King being acknowledged by the Estates in Diet. A century later this hereditary right of the House of Habsburg to the throne of Bohemia was not only solemnly reaffirmed but was also considerably extended, especially as regards female succession, by the "Pragmatic Sanction"—the common order of succession for all the kingdoms and lands of the House of Habsburg, promulgated by the Emperor Charles VI in 1713, and also ratified by all the Diets of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown in 1720. By the extension of the hereditary right of the House of Habsburg to the throne of Bohemia so as to include even remote lines of female succession, as, for example, the issue of Habsburg princesses married to members of foreign dynasties, the Pragmatic Sanction robbed of all practical significance the right of the Bohemian Estates to decide on the succession to the throne on the extinction of the House of Habsburg. Theoretically, of course, the right of election enjoyed by the Bohemian Estates or the Diet of Bohemia remained valid. The continued existence of a sovereign and united Bohemian State within the framework of the Habsburg dominions was more clearly manifested by the coronation of each Habsburg ruler as King of Bohemia. Such coronation was the rule practically without exception from the

Battle of the White Mountain down to the year 1848. Of the Habsburg rulers who from the Battle of the White Mountain down to the middle of the eighteenth century occupied the throne of Bohemia—they were Ferdinand II (1620–1637), Ferdinand III (1637–1657), Leopold I (1657–1705), Joseph I (1705–1711) and Charles VI (1711–1740)—only Joseph I was not crowned King of Bohemia, an omission that is to be attributed to the comparatively short period of his reign.

In more effective fashion than by the readjustment of the rule of succession was the royal power in Bohemia increased after the Battle of the White Mountain through a serious restriction of the various rights of the Bohemian Estates, the Crown thus procuring a far-reaching influence upon the administration of the state and upon public affairs generally.

From this point of view great importance is to be attached in particular to the change brought about by the Renewed Regulations in the character of the supreme offices and courts of the land. The former duty of the King to act in accordance with the advice of the supreme officials and judges in making appointments to the offices of the Provinces came to an end, so that the King could later fill these offices at his own free will. An end was put to the rule that the supreme officials of the Province could not be dismissed from office; on the contrary, they were required to surrender their posts at the end of five years of office. The supreme officials were no longer to be servants of the Land responsible to the Estates, but merely royal officials answerable to the King alone. In the same manner the courts of justice in Bohemia and Moravia

lost their one-time independence and were subordinated to the royal power. Substantial changes were likewise made in the composition and jurisdiction of the Diets of the Provinces. In Bohemia there was added to the three Estates already represented in the Diet—the lords, the knights and the burgesses—a third Estate: that of the clergy; and this Estate, to which belonged the archbishop, bishops and prelates who held domains recorded in the state archives, was made the first Estate of the Province. In Moravia where four Estates already existed, that of the clergy was given first place, ranking above even the lords. The participation of the towns in the Diets almost completely lost its former significance by the fact that the representatives of the burgesses were given only one vote together, whereas each member of the other three Estates had an individual vote. The provision that all legislative power pertained to the King limited the powers of the Diets practically to the mere granting of taxes. In time—1640—the Diets recovered the right of legislative initiative in matters which did not affect the royal power, that is, mainly in economic and social questions, but this by no means restored to them their former significance as legislative bodies.

This profoundly fundamental revolution in the relations between the royal power and that of the Estates following the Battle of the White Mountain was increased and intensified by the fact that a change occurred in the very character of the Bohemian Estates and in their material and moral condition. The counter-reformation activities of the triumphant régime of Ferdinand, coupled with the mass confiscations that followed the Battle of the White Mountain, caused a

large number of the old noble families either to settle abroad where they died out, or to become so impoverished that they lost their previous significance. The other noble families became increasingly alienated from the old traditions of the Bohemian Estates as they had existed previous to the Battle of the White Mountain not only in the matter of religion but also in that of nationality and politics, drew near to the dynasty and accommodated themselves to it. Their ranks were augmented by numbers of foreign nobles who naturally from the very outset lacked all understanding for the old traditions. The Bohemian nobility after the Battle of the White Mountain, being in substance a nobility of the court and of the dynasty, could not by any means be such an important and independent political factor in the country as was the nobility previous to that event.

The Estate of the burghesses was affected in much the same manner as that of the nobility. The impoverishment of the towns and the townspeople through the confiscations that followed the Battle of the White Mountain and the hardships of the subsequent war, the emigration of a large proportion of the more convinced members of the Estate of the burghesses and the restrictions of their political rights undermined for long the material and intellectual development of the Bohemian towns. Even in the Diets of the period succeeding the Battle of the White Mountain the representatives of the towns were little more than tolerated onlookers. The position of the unfree peasantry, devoid of rights just as in the preceding era, also underwent serious deterioration. The dependence of this class upon their masters grew steadily more and more pronounced, and

their tributes and duties increased manifold as compared with the old agreements and customs. The absolutism of this period itself contributed perhaps most of all to a deterioration in the position of the peasant folk. By its incompetent financial administration the régime squandered all the benefits which the confiscations after the Battle of the White Mountain could have brought to the state treasury, it was compelled to levy burdensome taxes and allowed the weight of them to fall upon the lowest classes, especially upon the unfree peasantry.

The great increase in the royal power following the Battle of the White Mountain was not accompanied by any growth of the external significance of the Bohemian State. The very victory of Ferdinand II over the Bohemian Estates had been purchased by the loss of Upper and Lower Lusatia. These two territories were pledged by the Emperor Ferdinand in 1620 to the Elector of Saxony for the aid which the Elector promised him against his opponents, and by the Treaty of Prague concluded in 1635 they passed into the possession of the Elector as a fief of the Bohemian throne, never again to be restored to Bohemia. A hundred years later the Bohemian State lost the greater part of Silesia—exclusive of the regions of Těšín, Opava and Krnovsko—as well as Kladsko (Glatz) which till then had pertained directly to the Kingdom of Bohemia. This large and important part of the territory of the Bohemian State was in 1742, after the victorious war waged by Frederick the Great of Prussia against Maria Theresa, the Habsburg heir to the Bohemian throne, surrendered to Prussia. The substantial diminution in the territorial area of the Bohemian State caused a decline in the importance of the Bohemian Crown for the Habs-

burg Empire, all the more so as the territories of the other two component parts of the empire were at the same time more closely united. From the middle of the seventeenth century all the Austrian lands, previously ruled over separately by different members of the House of Habsburg, were united in the hands of a single ruler who was simultaneously King of Bohemia and King of Hungary, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century the Habsburg dominion in Hungary had, by the acquisition of Transylvania and the expulsion of the Turks from Hungary, been expanded to include the entire area which the Hungarian Crown held up to the Great War. All this caused a much evident decline in the importance of the Bohemian State for the Habsburg Empire, compared with its previous position.

Neither the diminution of the area of the state nor the contraction of the ancient rights of the Estates by the victorious royal power affected directly the independence of the Bohemian Lands as a state. The Lands of the Bohemian Crown did not cease even after the Battle of the White Mountain, to be an independent integral state possessing its own rights as such. The most manifest outward expression of this independence and integrity was the Bohemian Court Chancellery at Vienna. This was originally only a branch of the Bohemian Royal Council or Royal Chancellery at Prague Castle, but the circumstance that the center of gravity of the governmental power over the Bohemian Lands was transferred to Vienna raised this Bohemian Court Chancellery to a position above all the supreme offices of the Province and made of it an office to which they were subordinated. Its functions

applied equally to all the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, the provincial offices of which communicated with the central government of the empire solely through it. All imperial decisions touching the Bohemian Lands issued from the Bohemian Court Chancellery through the hands of the Bohemian Supreme Chancellor, who was thus given the opportunity of upholding the special rights and interests of the Bohemian Crown.

Indirectly, of course, the revolution brought about by the result of the Battle of the White Mountain seriously undermined the foundations of the independence of the Bohemian State. The vast growth in the power of the monarch greatly increased the importance of the central departments of state common to all the domains of the House of Habsburg, while the purely Bohemian offices and institutions lost their former significance. Over and above this, however, the Habsburg kings of Bohemia could now, being no longer seriously checked by the rights of the Bohemian Estates, rule in the Bohemian Lands in like manner and on like principles as in the other Lands where they had similar power, that is, in the German-Austrian territories. Thus there was formed a closer union between the Bohemian and the German-Austrian Lands, while Hungary, where the dynasty had not acquired such power as it had in Bohemia after the Battle of the White Mountain, developed along substantially different lines. This diversity in development also, of course, affected Slovakia.

Through the decline in the political importance of Prague and the growing concentration of the state administration and public life generally in Vienna the

Bohemian Lands also suffered a setback in the economic sphere. Of the yield of the heavy and constantly increasing taxes which the Vienna Government collected from these Lands only an insignificant portion returned to them. These revenues were almost all expended either in promoting the European policy of the dynasty, on wars waged on the Rhine, in Italy or in Hungary, which resulted it is true in liberation from the Turkish yoke and in political unification, or they were spent in the upkeep of the Vienna court and the central departments of government there which swallowed immense sums of money. While Vienna grew and was enriched for the most part at the expense of the Bohemian Lands Prague vegetated politically, socially and economically and despite its inviolate state independence Bohemia became more and more a mere ruthlessly exploited province of the Habsburg Empire.

The revolution associated with the White Mountain likewise inflicted grievous injury upon the Czech language and upon Czech nationality. By the Renewed Regulations of the year 1627 it was laid down that in all offices and courts the German language was to enjoy equal rights with the Czech which till then had been the only language used there. The very Regulations themselves—though they were a Bohemian code—were issued first in German as the original code, and only afterwards in Czech. From this time on preference was given in all other departments to the German tongue. Through the influence of the German dynasty and the German central departments of government the German language steadily gained ground on the Czech language throughout the Bohemian Lands as the

official medium, so that finally, in the eighteenth century, it became almost exclusively the official language not merely in the royal offices but also in the Diet and in the offices of the Estates. This penetration of the German tongue into public life had been facilitated by the change brought about after the Battle of the White Mountain in the population of the Bohemian Lands itself. First of all the racial character of the nobility, which now even more than in the preceding epoch was the main and, indeed, almost the sole political representative of the population, had undergone a change. Of the foreign nobles who had come into possession of the estates of the old Czech noble families that had been forced to leave the country, some had indeed in the seventeenth century become Czech, but the great majority of them remained an alien element within the nation, an alien element so powerful that it was they who by their example influenced the old Czech nobility. Desirous of making for themselves a career at court such as was open without question to the foreign nobles who had settled in Bohemia, the Czech nobles endeavored to vie with them in their knowledge of the German language, they gave their children a German education, and in short became Germanized. The Germanization of the Czech towns was likewise greatly facilitated by the revolutionary changes that followed the Battle of the White Mountain and by the Thirty Years' War, when the better part of the Czech townsfolk fled the country to escape religious persecution, while the horrors of war also produced great breaches in the ranks of the town populations. The German immigrants now pouring into the Czech towns did not, in these circumstances, become Czech to the same extent

as before, on the contrary, they sometimes got the upper hand and themselves Germanized the Czech population they had found there. Throughout the rural districts, too, a new wave of colonization, encouraged by the alien landowners, caused an expansion of the German element, especially where secret emigration and warfare had left whole villages and regions waste and desolate. Thus several regions previously Czech had already become Germanized in the seventeenth century, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century the nationality frontier was roughly as it exists today. That these losses—for the most part permanent ones—which the Bohemian nationality suffered in the epoch following the Battle of the White Mountain were not, apart from the nobility and towns, a good deal larger is to be attributed to the fact that the unfree peasantry was prohibited from emigrating. Thus the rural folk remained Czech, and they preserved, even throughout the time of the profoundest decline of the nation, so much elemental strength that in some regions—especially in Moravia—they even recovered by process of natural expansion the ground that had been lost by the Bohemian nationality.

The losses suffered by Czech nationality in the period after the Battle of the White Mountain also seriously affected intellectual activities in the Bohemian Lands. In the early years of that period Czech learning cultivated for the most part by the Czech exiles living beyond the frontiers produced several of its finest works. It was this period which saw the full expansion of the many-sided and universally recognized activity of the most notable of all these exiles—the last Bishop of the Unity of Bohemian Brethren and one of the

greatest teachers of mankind, John Amos Comenius, who died in 1670. In time, however, intellectual life in the Czech nation, whether among the exiles or among those who had remained in the land, was almost completely silenced. There appeared practically nothing but the literary and scientific activities of a few Catholic priests who wrote and published their works, devoted mostly to the Bohemian past and its antiquities, in the Latin tongue: the patriotic Jesuit Bohuslav Balbín, who died in 1688, and others. Latin also became the exclusive medium of instruction at the University of Prague which in the year 1622 was amalgamated with the Jesuit Academy, renamed the Charles-Ferdinand University, and handed over for the most part to the Jesuits. In these circumstances Czech literature suffered a profound eclipse. Few Czech works appeared, and those that did were of practically no literary value, intended only for the barest needs of the common people whose intellectual level had sunk low compared with the preceding period. On the other hand, the plastic arts flourished in the Bohemian Lands after the Battle of the White Mountain. The wealth acquired by the church and the Catholic nobles facilitated the building of numerous magnificent churches, palaces and mansions. Thus there arose at Prague and in the country many splendid examples of baroque architecture and sculpture which still survive as a permanent and precious heritage from this period. The first authors of these works were, it is true, for the most part Italians, but they were soon joined by native masters, several of whom produced works of great perfection. The period also saw the expansion and improvement of music, ecclesiastical and secular,

most of it of Italian origin. The arts, of course, were mainly cultivated by the upper classes of the then society, entirely alienated for the most part from Czech national life, but they nevertheless reached also the lower classes of the Czech people, especially in the country regions, giving an impulse to artistic effort there in the sphere of folksong and popular art—ceramics, embroideries. In this way Czech popular art at that time flourished in unprecedented measure.

1848. At the head of this governorship, which was otherwise of a wholly bureaucratic character, was placed the High Burgrave, that is, the supreme official of the Land under the old order, who could not be a foreigner but must be a member of the nobility possessing estates in Bohemia. The institution of a gubernium was similarly applied to Moravia and Silesia. Not only the supreme administration of the Lands, but also the local administration was taken away from members of the Estates and transferred to officials directly subordinated to the Crown. In the reign of Joseph II even the ancient courts of the Estates throughout the Bohemian Lands were displaced by new bodies, the judges being now taken from the ranks of experienced lawyers, irrespective of whether they were members of the Estates or not.

Parallel with the relegation of the Estates from political and judicial administration, the importance of the Diets of the Bohemian Lands was undermined in various ways. Their main rights were infringed upon, on the one hand, by the conclusion of agreements running for a number of years touching the collection of taxes and, on the other hand, by the imposition of taxes by virtue of the mere royal power without the consent of the Diets. The Diets now granted little more than military contributions, while their influence upon the use to which the contributions were put, and upon the recruiting and maintaining of an army, became practically nil. The legislative activities, too, of the Diets, which had still been manifested in the seventeenth century at least by their passing various measures and laws of a police and economic character, now ceased. Important laws were promulgated by the Crown with-

out the participation of the Diets, and after the union of the Bohemian and Austrian chancelleries, these laws were measures issued in common for the Bohemian and Austrian Lands.

By the close of the reign of Joseph II some feeble remnants were all that was left of the one-time independent administration exercised by the Estates.

The governments of Maria Theresa and Joseph II devoted great attention to the position of the unfree peasants. The almost unlimited power of the masters, as it had hitherto existed, was already limited in the reign of Maria Theresa by the fact that the management and offices of their estates were subjected to the many-sided supervision exercised by the district authorities through whom the villeins came into direct touch with the state power and received its protection. The payments and services which the serfs had to render were so adjusted as to prevent any aggravation of these burdens and to eliminate the worse evils connected with their enforcement. In 1781 Joseph II issued a charter abolishing the main features of serfdom, i e., the various limitations of personal liberty which had evolved since the close of the Middle Ages. The serfs no longer required the consent of their masters in order to be able to marry, to learn a trade, to study or to change their domicile. By another enactment Joseph II limited the powers of punishment possessed by the masters and made it possible for the serfs to submit complaints and take legal action against the masters.

Notable changes occurred during the reign of Maria Theresa in the educational system. The state, which had up to now left the care of education to the church and the local authorities, took up in systematic fashion

the task of providing schools throughout the country. In all parishes elementary schools of a simple type were inaugurated, and in all larger townships elementary schools of a more advanced type were established. The abolition of the Jesuit Order broke the dominion of that religious body over the grammar schools (gymnasias) and the university. The former passed almost completely into the hands of the Order of the Piarists, while at the university, the curriculum of which underwent a substantial change, secular teachers gained the upper hand. Thus into the schools and from them to the educated classes there penetrated a new spirit of enlightened rationalism. This spirit brought about a change in religious policy. Even under Maria Theresa the authorities had begun to proceed in more moderate fashion against the secret adherents of other confessions than Catholicism who had attracted attention either by leaving the country or by taking part in serious peasant risings in several parts of Bohemia and Moravia. By the "Patent of Toleration" issued by Joseph II in 1781 these non-Catholics were permitted to proclaim their adherence either to the Augsburg (Lutheran) or the Reformed Confession; from then on both were permitted to exist in the state. The two confessions were now joined by about 45,000 persons in Bohemia and by not quite so many in Moravia—a mere fraction of the Czech nation. The overwhelming majority of the people remained, even on the publication of the Patent of Toleration, in allegiance to the Church of Rome.

The reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II did considerable injury to Czech nationality, for they were combined with an intentional and determined process

of Germanization undertaken with the object of making the entire population of the Habsburg Empire one in respect of language and nationality. It was precisely educational reform, otherwise highly meritorious, which was the most effective and most dangerous weapon in this process of Germanization. School education, which had hitherto been practically a closed book to the common people, brought with it the danger that the broad masses of the Czech nation would be largely converted into Germans, a result which happened in some places, especially in regions where the population was already of a mixed character. It was in this way that as late as the eighteenth century, and indeed to some extent even in the nineteenth century, the Germanization of several regions on the western frontiers of Bohemia was completed.

The German element in Bohemia received at this epoch a powerful impulse also from the great change which occurred in the country's industrial conditions. Production by means of the crafts, which up to that time had been more or less uniformly distributed over the whole country, was from the eighteenth century onward increasingly displaced by factory output on a large scale. This industrial activity was concentrated in the mountainous regions along the frontiers where favorable conditions existed for the establishment of big undertakings—in particular a poor population content with low wages, an abundance of water power and mineral resources, and the vicinity of foreign markets. Thus the whole North of Bohemia, peopled for the most part by Germans, became the industrial area of Bohemia, and the German towns there the main sites of Bohemian industry. This new industry became

one of the main pillars of the economic strength of the German element in Bohemia, and the cause of their great predominance over the Czech element in many spheres. It also contributed, however, in no small measure to enhancing the economic significance of the Bohemian Lands within the Habsburg Empire, and later brought many benefits also to the Czech population of those Lands.

The cultural policy, too, of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, although its Germanizing tendency was a serious menace to the Czech nation, had most beneficial effects upon the intellectual life of the people. It assisted in overcoming the spiritual reaction that followed the Battle of the White Mountain, and thus made possible the return of the educated classes of the Bohemian nation to the great traditions of the era that had preceded the White Mountain, at the same time unconsciously preparing the soil for the intellectual rebirth of the Bohemian nation. The very circumstance that German was systematically introduced aroused the opposition of those sections of the nation that had not lost all their national consciousness, and kindled in them an active and effective patriotism. The ruthless onslaught of Viennese centralism and rationalism upon the old order, customs and traditions of the Bohemian Lands aroused in the minds of the inhabitants, irrespective of nationality, an affection for the peculiarities of their native land and a desire to preserve them. Thus there came into being in the Bohemian Lands an unprecedented local patriotism, which later proved a powerful source of inspiration for the growing national consciousness of the Czechs.

CHAPTER X

The Period of Reactionary Absolutism

1790-1848

THE far-reaching reforms undertaken by Joseph II aroused opposition in the Bohemian Lands as they did elsewhere. Here, too, as in the other parts of the Habsburg Empire, his successor Leopold II (1790-1792), was compelled to annul some of the changes. In the matter of the Constitution, the position of affairs on the whole created by the reforms of Maria Theresa was restored. To the Bohemian Estates and their Diets was restored something of their former rights, but they did not now or later regain their earlier significance. On the contrary, under Leopold's successors, Francis II (1792-1835) and Ferdinand V (1835-1848), their activities steadily declined and lost practically all significance. Even the most important right of the Diet of the Estates—the right of granting the King taxes—shrank to a mere formality devoid of actual significance, for the Diets with a display of ostentatious ceremony merely took cognizance of the royal demands for taxation without discussing them. Of the ancient high offices of the State of Bohemia and the other Lands there survived for the most part only the names, these being conferred as titles of honor, especially on the occasion of coronations. Only a few—in particular the offices of High Burgrave and of High Chancellor—preserved some actual significance, and as they could be conferred only upon members of the Bohemian

nobility, they secured for the Bohemian Estates up to the year 1848 participation in the political and judicial administration of the Bohemian Lands. Otherwise practically all public administration was in the hands of an official bureaucracy not drawn from the ranks of the Estates, and to this bureaucracy even the insignificant remnants of the old administrative rights of the Estates were now subordinated. All this resulted in a growth of the importance of the offices of state in Vienna, and completed the administrative unification of the Bohemian Lands with the other territories of the Habsburg Empire.

Nevertheless, the Lands of the Bohemian Crown preserved their own special constitutional position within the Habsburg Federation. Nor were they deprived of their state rights even in 1804 when the ruler of the Bohemian, Austrian and Hungarian lands assumed the title of "Austrian Emperor." Up to then there had existed no common title for the monarchs who ruled over the kingdoms and territories of the House of Austria; officially they had been designated only Kings of Bohemia and Hungary and Archdukes of Austria. The title of Emperor had been theirs only in virtue of their dignity as Holy Roman (German) emperors, a dignity enjoyed by all of them since the time of Ferdinand I. Not until 1804, just two years previous to the extinction of the old Holy Roman Empire, did Francis I assume the title of hereditary Emperor of Austria. The introduction of this dynastic title did not, however, swallow up or eliminate the Bohemian royal power, for it was expressly laid down that all the titles, privileges and status of all the kingdoms and Lands of the House of Habsburg were to

remain unchanged, and that in particular the coronation of the Emperor as King of Bohemia and King of Hungary was to be preserved. By the assumption of the ornamental title of "Austrian Emperor" the common monarch of the Habsburg domains did not cease to reign in the Lands of the Bohemian Crown as King of Bohemia, and in the Lands of the Hungarian Crown as King of Hungary. Although ere long a title purely dynastic began to be transferred to the united territories of the hereditary Habsburg States, so that the phrases "Austrian Empire" and "Austrian imperial state" were employed, the state sovereignty, independent existence and unity of the Bohemian Crown, once more confirmed by the coronation of Ferdinand V in 1836 as King of Bohemia, were never denied up to the year 1848.

In the Bohemian Lands, however, just as in the other territories of the Habsburg dominion, the principles of internal policy had undergone a substantial change since the reign of Joseph II. As early as the close of the eighteenth century the enlightened absolutism of Maria Theresa and Joseph II was succeeded by a limited police absolutism. While leaving untouched a number of the fundamental reforms carried out under the régime of enlightened absolutism—the reform of serfdom and religious tolerance, this police absolutism caused the whole administration of the state and all public life generally to be permeated with an entirely different spirit. It was the spirit of cultural and political reaction, born of the dread which the French Revolution had spread throughout all Europe. While never ceasing to proclaim the welfare of its subjects as its supreme aim, the government manifested its care for

them largely in systematic efforts to protect them from all "destructive" and "subversive" doctrines which produced revolution by restricting in every possible way all intellectual contact with countries from which such doctrines might issue, and by a strict control of all manifestations of freedom of thought.

Connected with this was the change that occurred in the church policy of the then Austrian Government. The relations between state and church, as established in the reign of Joseph II, remained in substance unaltered up to 1848, but the attitude of the government to the Catholic Church, in which it sought support for its power, underwent a change. Various religious orders were again allowed to enter the country, especially Ligurians and Redemptorists, and even the Jesuit Order was restored. It was once more permitted to establish episcopal theological seminaries, and the clergy were given a certain supervision over the schools and an increased influence in spiritual matters. At the same time the influence of the nobles, especially those of the higher order, upon the state administration marked a growth. The higher order of nobles, into whose hands had again fallen the leading posts in public administrations and in the army, drew closer to the dynasty with which they shared a fear of a coming revolution, thus abandoning not only their opposition to absolutism and centralization, but also their defense of the ancient rights of the Bohemian Lands.

In nationality policy the Germanization traditions of the Josephine era lived on. In the sphere of public affairs and of education the exclusive dominion of the German language was maintained, and the Germanization of the Czech masses continued. But a revolt

against this state of things gradually assumed shape among the Czech folk. This revolt was rooted in the old traditions of the nation. The counter-reformation, which followed the Battle of the White Mountain and had caused such a profound revolution in the religious life of the Czech nation, had never deprived the people of their love for their native tongue nor of their memory of the nation's great past. Especially powerful was the national Czech consciousness of several Catholic priests in the period following the Battle of the White Mountain—Balbín, Pešina, Beckovský—and their writings spread this national consciousness among the people. A powerful impulse was given to this trend by the renewal of learning and scientific inquiry in the Bohemian Lands through a deeper appreciation of Czech political and cultural history, of the Czech language and of the old national literature. Outstanding personalities who occupied themselves with the study of these things—the list of their names opens with that of the historian G. Dohner and concludes with that of the most eminent of them all J. Dobrovský, the great founder of Slavonic studies—wrote as yet only in Latin or in German. Not even the first institutions of learning and art which arose in the Bohemian Lands at the close of the eighteenth century—the Royal Bohemian Society was founded in the reign of Joseph II, the Theater of the Estates in 1783, the Prague Conservatory of Music in 1810, and the National Museum in 1818—were of Czech character. They were, however, the fruit of local patriotism, of affection for Bohemia and by their activities they prepared the way for the awakening in the nineteenth century of a sense of Czech nationality. The elemental

revolt of the Czechs against the systematic process of Germanization which was conducted mainly through the schools of every category was strengthened in the sphere of both ideas and sentiment by the contemporary romanticism, which entered the country mainly from Germany and aroused among the Czechs a fervent attachment to their mother tongue and the memories of the far-off past of the nation. Through the enthusiastic and self-sacrificing labors of the pioneers of this movement, the so-called "awakeners" of the nation, at the head of whom stood at first the indefatigable author of the great dictionary of the Czech language, Joseph Jungmann, and later the famous historian Francis Palacký, there arose a series of outstanding works of research, poetry and popular education, which, being written in Czech, became the basis of the modern Czech literary language and of modern Czech education generally.

The pioneer work carried on in this spirit was also shared in to no inconsiderable extent by members of the Slovak branch of the Czechoslovak nation. Although the Slovaks had for centuries lived under the Hungarian Crown and had thus been cut off from the Bohemian State, they had never entirely lost their consciousness of unity in language and race with the Czech branch of their nation with whom, moreover, they had at various times in the interval had close and fruitful intercourse. Up to the end of the eighteenth century Czech had been the literary language of the Hungarian Slovaks, and Czech books, especially religious works, their regular reading matter. It was not until the close of the eighteenth century that attempts were made, on the initiative of A. Bernolák, a Catholic

priest, to convert one of the Slovak dialects into the literary language of the Hungarian Slovaks. Even for long afterwards the majority of the Slovaks, particularly the Slovak Protestants, remained faithful to the Czech language. Fervent champions of Czech were found in particular in the poet Jan Kollár, and the distinguished authority on Slavonic antiquities, P. J. Šafařík, whom the Czechoslovak nation rightly ranks among its leading pioneers. Thanks largely to them, the awakening Czechoslovak nation saw in the idea of community of interests among the Slavonic races an essential element of their national consciousness.

The fact that precisely those classes of the Czech nation that had preserved some national consciousness were entirely devoid of political power fully explains not only the general political oppression that existed in the Habsburg Empire prior to 1848 but also the non-political character of the national strivings of the Czechs at that period. Struggling with all their power just to preserve their language and their nationality, the Czech patriots could not seriously even think of regaining the lost political rights of their nation, or of a restoration of their one-time state independence. The development of national consciousness, however, and the effect of the universal political movement in Europe awoke also among the Czechs a longing for political liberty. Thus even prior to 1848 an effort was broached for a restoration of the old connection between Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, and for the recognition of their special constitutional position within the Habsburg Empire. The old, almost defunct, Diet of the Bohemian Estates also awoke to new life in the last few years previous to 1848. The general political cur-

rents of that epoch, and especially the example set by the Hungarian Estates, caused the Bohemian Estates from the year 1842 onward to attempt to revive the validity of their former rights, particularly the right to participation in the making of laws. At the same time a section at least of the Bohemian nobility realized, even before 1848, that the constitutional rights which the Estates were demanding for themselves would have to be extended to other classes of the population. In 1848, however, those classes, till then devoid of political rights, spoke out themselves in the name of the Land and its inhabitants.

CHAPTER XI

The Revolutionary Year of 1848 and the Period of New Absolutism

1848-1859

THE stern police absolutism which had been installed in the Habsburg Monarchy under the effect of the great French Revolution, and had been introduced and maintained mainly through the leading minister of the monarchy, Prince Metternich—Metternich Absolutism, was in the end unable to withstand the elemental force of the nation's desire for radical changes in public affairs. The success of the February revolution in Paris, and the triumphant progress of the popular movement in several of the German States aroused also the nations of the Austrian Empire to open revolt against the rigid political order then in force. This revolt was not led by those who had hitherto been the legal representatives of the Land—the Estates—but by persons that were unconnected with the Estates, by the classes of the population, mainly that of the towns, who had never yet enjoyed political rights.

The first great manifestation of the revolt was a mass meeting of the citizens of Prague held on March 11 in the St. Václav Baths. On the proposition of Dr. A. Brauner, an advocate, it was resolved to submit a petition embodying the meeting's demands touching the whole country, and in rest also all the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, a petition that in the name of the entire country and its inhabitants was to be laid before the Monarch. It was realized that a mere gathering of

Prague citizens, however largely attended, was inadequate justification for this procedure, and it was suggested that the demands should be presented at court through the Diet of the Estates, several of the members of which had signified their willingness in the matter. Finally, owing to the lack of confidence felt in the Estates, it was resolved to submit the petition direct. First, however, the general public were invited to sign it, and in this manner the support of a majority of the progressive population, including the Germans, in Bohemia was assured. Besides general political liberties—liberty of the press, right of public meeting, liberty of religious confession, etc.—the petition demanded the abolition of serfdom, a just redistribution of public duties and burdens, and the introduction of freely elected bodies to manage the affairs of towns and parishes. It was further asked that the Bohemian Diet of the Estates should henceforth include elected deputies of the towns and rural constituencies, that the bonds between the Lands of the Bohemian Crown should be secured by the summoning every year of a Diet common to them all, and that these Lands be united in the sphere of administration in such a way that common central political, judicial and financial offices be established for them at Prague. In the meantime at Vienna where the mighty movement had swept Prince Metternich from power and had forced the grant of several liberties, especially the freedom of the press, the presenters of the petition on March 23 received an answer which, omitting all reference to the demands for the administrative unity of the Bohemian Lands, suggested that the question of admission of deputies to the Bohemian Diet should be settled in agreement with the

Bohemian Estates—at the same time it was indicated that the Diet could only admit elected representatives of the towns—and that the question of a common Diet for Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia should be discussed with the Estates of those Lands

This unsatisfactory answer moved the committee elected by the St. Václav assembly to draft a new petition. This new petition resolutely rejected the suggestion that the Estates should decide upon several of the demands put forward in the first petition and emphatically repeated the demand that the ties between the Lands of the Bohemian Crown should be revived through the institution of a Diet common to them all, and of central offices of administration under the control of a special Ministry answerable to the Diet.

The Cabinet Letter of April 8 containing the answer to the second petition met these demands only imperfectly. It granted it is true the speedy summoning of the Bohemian Diet including representatives of the town and rural population and it also granted the establishment of supreme offices for the Kingdom of Bohemia with their seat at Prague, but the demand for the union of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia under a common supreme administration at Prague and a common Diet was put off with a reference to the forthcoming imperial Diet in which these lands were to be represented as well as the others. Although the Cabinet Letter of April 8 was on this point a clear repudiation of the Czech conception of the unbroken constitutional existence and unity of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, the promise it gave of the institution of supreme departments for the Kingdom of Bohemia at Prague and of the summoning of an extended Bohemian Diet represented a

hope that the Kingdom of Bohemia would at least secure its own administrative apparatus which would express the continuity of a constitutional existence distinct from that of the other Lands of the Habsburg Monarchy, and that the nucleus of the new adjustment of constitutional conditions would be found in the ancient rights of the Estates of this kingdom, and that at any rate in this way there would be preserved a legal continuity with the country's past. This hope was somewhat strengthened by the imperial manifesto of March 15, 1848, which declared that the Constitution in preparation for the Habsburg Lands would be based on the ancient rights of the Estates of those Lands. In this spirit, too, there was carried out in Moravia a change of the old Diet of the Estates into a Diet answering to the needs of the day, for that Diet in its old form decided to supplement its numbers with representatives of the people outside the ranks of the Estates. The promise of summoning the Bohemian Diet, however, as given in the Cabinet Letter, was never kept, and the joint Constitution decreed in April, 1848, for the non-Hungarian Lands of the Habsburg Monarchy, issued by Pillersdorf purely on the basis of the royal power, paid no heed whatever to the historical rights of the individual Lands or of their existing institutions, but introduced a joint imperial Diet, the members of which were to be chosen directly by the electorate and not by the Diets of the individual Lands, and a joint Ministry responsible to this imperial Diet.

The Czechs themselves, whose political leaders were mainly the historian Francis Palacký, Dr. A. Brauner, Dr. F. L. Rieger, a young lawyer, and the talented journalist Karel Havlíček, put up no great opposition

to this trend of affairs. On the one hand, fear of the danger presented by the powerful pan-German movement and its outstanding fruit—the Parliament fixed for meeting at Frankfurt—and, on the other hand, hope that the Habsburg Monarchy, deprived, by the union of all its Slav population, of its artificial German character, would be their surest bulwark against the pan-German menace, led these men to make a sincere effort to preserve the empire and to pursue a genuinely Austrian policy. *Palacký*, in his famous open letter of April 11, declared that the Czechs would not attend to vote at the Frankfurt Diet, that, on the contrary, they were desirous of preserving and strengthening Austria in the hope that Austria would be a guarantee to them and the other peoples of the empire of their national liberty and equality. The Slav Congress which assembled in Prague at the end of May as an assembly of Austrian Slavs and which culminated in the eloquent and inspired speech of the great Slavonic scholar P. J. Šafařík—a speech permeated with a spirit of the purest humanity—also expressed itself in favor of the conversion of Austria into a federation of nations all enjoying equal rights.

At the constituent imperial Diet which in July assembled at Vienna, but later, being driven away by the rising that took place in that capital on October 6, was transferred at the close of November to Kroměříž in Moravia, the Czechs merely strove to attain such a common imperial constitution as would insure for the main groups of the Habsburg Lands, especially of course the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, at least the right of independent legislation in internal matters, leaving to the imperial Diet only the right of deciding

upon common matters essential for the position of the monarchy as a great power. They failed, however, to secure even so much. The draft of the Imperial Constitution, drawn up by the constitutional committee of the Kroměříž Diet, paid no regard whatsoever either to the claims of the groups of Lands or to the unity of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown. It merely granted to the individual Diets of the Lands a small measure of legislative power, and subordinated them to the imperial Parliament common to all the non-Hungarian Lands of the monarchy—a body of two chambers, one of which—the People's Chamber—was to be chosen by popular election, while the other—the Chamber of the Lands—was to be chosen by the provincial Diets. In the imperial Diet at Kroměříž the Czechs took an active part in the combined struggle of the nationalities there represented for the so-called fundamental civic rights—for the recognition of the sovereign power of the people, the abolition of titles of nobility and entailed estates, for the democratization of the Catholic Church and the limitation of its rights.

The constituent Diet of Kroměříž, however, was not fated to complete its work. On December 2, 1848, following the abdication of the Emperor Ferdinand, the 18-year-old Francis Joseph ascended the throne, to rule over the Habsburg Empire up to the Great War (he died on November 21, 1916). Early in March, 1849, the government of the new Emperor dissolved the constituent Diet of Kroměříž, and simultaneously issued a new, the so-called March, constitution. This constitution, issued purely by virtue of the imperial power, applied to all the Lands of the Habsburg Empire, including Hungary, no recognition being given to a

special constitutional position of any of these Lands. It recognized only a single common citizenship of the empire, a single commercial and customs area, introduced a single imperial Parliament of two chambers, only one of which, the Upper Chamber, was to be elected by the Diets of the Lands, while all the Lands, the Hungarian included, were given a certain measure of independence solely within the framework of the common imperial constitution. The March Constitution was supplemented in the years 1849 and 1850 by new systems of administration for the various Lands based on this imperial constitution and not upon the ancient constitutions of the Estates of the individual Lands. These additions were likewise made merely by virtue of the autocratic power.

All this was a complete repudiation of the political efforts of the Czechs, fired as they had been by the movement of the year 1848, in so far as they were directed toward the recognition of a special state independence and unity of the Lands of the old Bohemian Crown. Complete failure likewise attended the attempt of the Slovak branch of the Czechoslovak nation in Hungary to secure some political rights. The systematic Magyarization of public life in Hungary, springing from a revolt against the Germanization efforts of the Viennese court, and carried on in ruthless fashion even long before 1848, had, it is true, deprived the Slovaks of their nobility who had become Magyarized, but it had aroused in a section of the Slovaks a consciousness of the national and political character of the Slovak nation. A significant manifestation of this consciousness was the petition unanimously decided upon at a Slovak Assembly, held on May 10, 1848, at Liptovský

Svätý Mikuláš. The petition asked not only for the right to use the native tongue in all public counsels and in the courts of justice, the introduction of the Slovak language to all schools and the establishment of a Slovak University, not only a general Diet for the nations of Hungary in which each deputy might speak in his native tongue, but also special Diets for each different nationality, and thus also a special Slovak Diet such as had never hitherto existed. As the Magyars opposed this program with the utmost determination, the leaders of the Slovaks in the spring and summer of 1849 appealed to the young Emperor Francis Joseph and his government at Vienna, asking for the institution of an autonomous Slovakia, and the formation of the Slovak counties into independent Crown Lands—but all in vain.

The great constitutional movement of the year 1848 which ended in the utter failure of the national and political aspirations of the Czechs and Slovaks culminated finally in complete absolutism. Neither the March Constitution of 1849 nor the system of administration for the Lands which had been decreed on its basis were put into effect, and no other constitution was offered the nations of Austria in their stead. The new absolutism—named, after the then Prime Minister, the Bach Absolutism, which was installed in all the lands of the empire at the close of the year 1851, proved a more rigid one than the absolutism that had been overthrown in March, 1848, for under it not the slightest regard was paid to the ancient rights of the Estates. By the movement of 1848 there had been swept, as it were, from the face of the earth the last remnants of the institutions and rights of the Estates

—the ancient historical constitutions of the Lands. The abolition of serfdom, passed by the constituent imperial Diet at Vienna in September, 1848, continued in force, and also the principle of the equality of all citizens before the law, the recognition of which was enforced by the movement of 1848 was expressly acknowledged by the revived absolutist régime. The abolition of the jurisdiction of masters over their serfs, and of the privileged position of several classes of the population, was made possible only by the introduction of a wholly uniform adjustment of legal and political administration throughout the empire. In the course of the years 1850-1852 new judicial and administrative districts were created on uniform lines. These in their turn were subordinated in part to the supreme courts of the Lands and in part to the offices of the governors of the individual Lands—offices which were constituted on purely bureaucratic lines without regard to the Estates. The supreme court of justice and court of appeal at Vienna was made the supreme instance for all courts of justice throughout the empire while at the head of the entire political administration—or Home Office—was placed a single Ministry of the empire responsible solely to the Emperor.

Thus not only was the entire jurisdiction of the one-time offices of the large landowners—the patrimonial offices, demolished—but also the ancient offices of the Estates of the Lands lost the last remnants of their importance. At the head of the political administration and of the courts in Bohemia there was no longer placed as up to 1848, the supreme officers of the Lands—the supreme Burgrave, the High Steward, the Lord Chief Justice of the courts of the Lands—who upheld

the interests of the Lands, but mere bureaucrats. In 1852 the chairmanship and conduct of the Committee of the Estates was transferred to the Governor, so that the affairs pertaining most particularly of all to the Estates were henceforth administered by a state official. In this form the old Committee of the Estates survived till the year 1861.

Within the uniform and united framework of the comprehensive state which the absolutist régime of Bach had created out of the sum total of the Lands of the Habsburg monarchy, inclusive of Hungary, the constitutional individuality of historical Bohemia was almost completely lost. In order that the artificially created unity of the empire might be assured, war in every conceivable form was waged upon the "particularist" efforts of the various nationalities; it was attempted to inculcate a uniform Austrian patriotism, and to create out of the nations an "Austrian" nationality, a process which, for the non-German races, was equivalent to a new Germanization. Through suppression of the liberty of the press and a sharper police control, the whole intellectual and political life of the Czech nation was held up exactly as it had been under the absolutist régime of Metternich. For the Slovaks in Hungary, however, the absolutism of Bach brought one or two advantages. One of them was the improvement of state administration generally in Hungary. The place of the old counties had been taken by large districts of which two, those of Košice and Bratislava, were almost exclusively Slovak in character, and in place of the coarse and uneducated officials of the counties there were introduced better educated and juster officials from the non-Hungarian Lands of the Austrian

Empire, especially from Bohemia. The Vienna Government's opposition to the political aspirations of the Hungarians resulted in checking the artificial process of Magyarization there for a time. In some of the secondary schools, Czech as the literary language of the Slovaks was introduced as a partial medium of instruction, and numerous Czech teachers were appointed to those schools. Soon, however, even in Slovakia a process of systematic Germanization of the schools and of public life generally set in.

For the intellectual life of the Czech nation no little significance was attached to the Concordat, concluded at the desire of the Emperor himself with the papal Curia in 1855. Under this agreement the full validity of the provisions of the canon law was acknowledged throughout the whole Habsburg Empire, the church was given extensive jurisdiction through its courts, it was assured an unprecedented influence upon all education, and in general secured an extent of liberties and rights such as it had enjoyed only in the period of its greatest power in the Middle Ages.

CHAPTER XII

Half a Century of Constitutional Life

1860-1914

THE downfall of Bach's absolutism, brought about by the difficult situation of the Habsburg Empire after the unsuccessful war in Italy, destroyed also its painfully constructed work. The new Austrian Cabinet with the Polish Conservative Goluchowski at its head reverted in its program to the old constitutions of the Estates of the Lands which, adapted to the new conditions, were to become the basis of a common Constitution for the whole empire. From this new trend originated the October Diploma of 1860 which the Emperor Francis Joseph issued "on his own authority" as "the permanent and irrevocable state law, as the rule of government for himself and his successors." He promised therein to exercise legislative power henceforth only in coöperation with the Diets of the Lands and the common Imperial Parliament (Reichsrat), to which the Diets were to send a certain number of representatives. According to the October Diploma, the new Imperial Constitution should have been based on the old constitutions of the Estates, adapted, of course, to the changed conditions. New constitutions, granted simultaneously with the October Diploma to some of the old Austrian Lands, provided for Diets founded on the principles of the Estates, thereby assuring the high nobility and the clergy an absolute preponderance over the representatives of the towns and villages. These

Diets were granted a certain measure of legislative power.

In the same year, however, Goluchowski the Conservative was succeeded by the German Liberal Schmerling. His government introduced the so-called February Constitution which was promulgated on February 21, 1861, again only by the supreme authority of the Emperor. It was thus arbitrarily decreed, and it applied to the whole empire, including Hungary. It introduced a common central Parliament composed of two chambers—a House of Deputies elected by the Diets of the Lands, and an Upper Chamber composed partly of hereditary members and partly of members nominated by the Emperor for life. It also provided for Land Diets the members of which were to be elected according to a special electoral system based on the principle of the representation of particular class interests, so that in their composition these Diets represented no continuity of the old Diets of the Estates. Besides their autonomous functions—administration of provincial institutions, construction of roads, public buildings, etc.—which were, so to speak, a legacy from the old Estates Committee of the Lands, these Diets were vested with a certain degree of legislative power.

The extent of this power was considerably less in the case of the non-Hungarian Diets, including the Diet of Bohemia, than in the case of the Hungarian Diets. Even in the Reichsrat the Hungarians had a special position. They were to take part in its deliberations, but only when it sat as a general Parliament and discussed certain matters common to the whole empire, whereas other matters common only to the non-Hungarian Lands were to be discussed in a Parliament in

which only the representatives of these non-Hungarian Lands, including Bohemia, would participate. As the Diets of these Lands were subordinated to the restricted Parliament from which their legislative power was derived, the legislative union of the Bohemian Lands with the other non-Hungarian Lands of the Austrian Empire was effected through the establishment of this restricted Parliament, whereas Hungary at the same time preserved her constitutional autonomy.

Despite all this the Hungarians emphatically refused to accept the February Constitution. The Hungarian Diets sent no representatives to the Parliament convoked according to this constitution, whereas the representatives of the Bohemian Lands did not hesitate to take part. At the end of two years, however, even the Czechs, dissatisfied with its proceedings, left Parliament declaring that its continued existence was in conflict with both the October Diploma and the February Constitution, and invoking at the same time the historical rights of the Kingdom of Bohemia. Meanwhile the Hungarian Slovaks, too, decided to put forward their political postulates. A few years earlier, renouncing the use of Czech as their literary language and adopting the Slovak dialect instead, they had imagined they would succeed in realizing their political aspirations within the framework of the Hungarian State. The famous Memorandum on which they agreed at Turčianský Svätý Martin in June, 1861, and which was addressed to the Hungarian Diet, claimed that the independent individuality of the Slovak nation should be recognized by law, that an Upper-Hungarian Slovak territory or province be established comprising the

whole area inhabited by the Slovaks, that within this territory the Slovak language should be recognized as the sole language to be used in public and in civic matters, in the churches, schools and courts of law, and finally that a Slovak Academy of Law be established. The Hungarian Diet, of course, rejected this Memorandum. During the first half of the sixties, as long as the question of the constitutional position of Hungary in the Habsburg Monarchy was unsolved, the Slovaks continued to enjoy comparative freedom. But the final solution of this question in favor of Hungary through the Settlement—*Ausgleich*—of 1867 put an end to the liberty of the Slovaks and delivered them over to increased oppression by the Magyars whom victory had intoxicated.

The Magyars achieved this triumph after a tough struggle with Vienna that yielded to their demands only under the effect of the Austrian defeat in the war with Prussia in 1866. By the Settlement of 1867 the special constitutional position of the Hungarian Crown in virtue of the old Hungarian laws was conceded. This meant, of course, the end of the uniform constitution of the Austrian Empire based on the October Diploma and the February Constitution. This was also recognized by the Reichsrat which, by the renewal of the old Hungarian Constitution, became definitively representative of the non-Hungarian, Cisleithanian Lands only. In December, 1867, a new constitution known as the December Constitution was proclaimed, applicable to the "Kingdoms and Lands represented in the Reichsrat" which was now the official title of the non-Hungarian territories of the Habsburg Monarchy, and which included, of course, the Lands of the Bohemian

Crown. The old Habsburg Monarchy thus became a Dual State, and began to be called "Austria-Hungary." The autonomy of Hungary thus attained, and later on further strengthened and intensified, indirectly contributed to the legal and effective union of the Bohemian Lands with the other Cisleithanian territories. The new common December Constitution now became the basis of this union. Apart from the fact that it applied only to the non-Hungarian part of the empire, this constitution was in many ways much more advantageous than the February Constitution of 1861. It bestowed greater legislative power on the Diets of the Lands, and lent a more decisive force to constitutional and liberal principles, for it established the responsibility of Cabinet Ministers, and laid down the so-called fundamental civic rights, especially the right of personal liberty, implying freedom of conscience, of science and the press as well as liberty of association and assembly, and the security and inviolability of property.

Nevertheless, it failed to satisfy the Czechs, for by recognizing Dualism, and thus the political independence of Hungary, it ignored the peculiar historical rights of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, and did not admit in any respect their special position, legally different as it was from that of the other Cisleithanian Lands of the Monarchy. The Czechs were all the more indignant since, during the preceding years of hostile tension and the war with Prussia which was fought on Bohemian soil and ended in the decisive defeat of Austria in 1866, they had been given an opportunity of proving by their unconditional refusal of the Prussian inducements to betray the Habsburg Empire, a remarkable fidelity to that empire, and they were encour-

nged by Austria in their hopes of a speedy fulfillment of their modest political demands. When they now saw that the Emperor and his government themselves had abandoned the unity of the empire by the Settlement with Hungary, although they had hitherto always rejected every effort at even a partial restitution of the independence of the Bohemian Lands on the ground of the duty of preserving this unity, and that they thus themselves denied the principles recently proclaimed in the October Diploma and the February Constitution, the Czechs began most emphatically to claim for the Lands of the Bohemian Crown a position appropriate to their historical, legal rights. In August, 1868, Czech deputies from Bohemia and Moravia issued the so-called "Declaration" protesting against the December Constitution and against the resolutions of the Reichsrat, proclaiming their determination touching the historic "state rights" of Bohemia, and demanding that Bohemia's relation to the other Lands ruled over by the Habsburgs should be that of merely a personal union.

Soon after this the Vienna Government began to make efforts to appease the Czechs. During the tenure of office of Hohenwart, whose Cabinet had been appointed under the effect of the proclamation in 1871 of a German Empire hereditary in the Hohenzollern dynasty, a settlement between the government and the Czech leaders was arrived at and embodied in the so-called "fundamental articles," i.e., a Bill for the legal adjustment of the relations of the Bohemian Lands to the rest of the empire. While accepting the Settlement with Hungary and respecting the Cisleithanian Constitution, these "articles" provided for a

special Minister to represent the Lands of the Bohemian Crown in the common Cisleithanian Cabinet. This Minister was to have the title of Court Chancellor of Bohemia, to represent Bohemia in the common Cisleithanian Cabinet, and at the same time to act partly as the highest responsible authority for all matters falling within the competence of the legislature of the Land and partly as the authority to carry out the laws passed in the common Imperial Congress in so far as they should concern those Lands. Although the fundamental articles involved a great concession on the part of the Czechs compared with the standpoint expressed in the Declaration of 1868, and attempted to incorporate only some—and these relatively feeble—elements of the historic rights of Bohemia in the dual organism of the empire as constituted by the Settlement of 1867, they met with violent opposition from both the Austrian Germans and the Hungarian Government. It is true that by an imperial rescript of September 12, 1871, the Bohemian Diet obtained a promise that the Emperor should recognize the historic rights of the Kingdom of Bohemia by the taking of a coronation oath, but this promise was never fulfilled, and the last serious attempt at a political settlement between the Czechs and the Habsburg dynasty came to an end at the close of October by the dropping of the "fundamental articles" and the fall of the Hohenwart Government. Under the new German Liberal—Auersperg—government there was a renewal of the systematic persecution of the Czech political movement, persecution of the press, suppression of the freedom of assembly, dissolution of the representative local government bodies, and all kinds of police oppression.

The Czechs, who never ceased to proclaim their adherence to the program of Bohemia's historic rights and who, by their non-participation in the Reichsrat, showed their opposition in principle to the existing constitutional conditions, were punished by the government in other ways too. At the elections of 1872 a German majority in the Bohemian Diet was secured by illicit pressure on the part of the government, and in 1873 the introduction of direct elections to the Reichsrat deprived the Diets of the Lands of the right to send their representatives to that assembly as guaranteed by the February and December constitutions. The Czechs, acting in harmony with the old nobility, with whom they had arrived at a political rapprochement during the past years of the great struggle for the historic rights of Bohemia, persisted in their passive opposition: they refused to send their deputies to Parliament, and they abstained from participation in the proceedings of the Diets of the Lands. Although the Czechs of Moravia entered the Land Diet and Reichsrat in 1873-1874, the Czechs of Bohemia did not do so until 1879, when the Auersperg Government was succeeded by one more favorably inclined to the Czech cause—the government of Count Edward Taaffe.

On their entry into the Reichsrat in 1879 the Czechs lodged a protest and invoked the historic rights of Bohemia—a protest which was subsequently reiterated by all Czech deputies down to the very break-up of the Habsburg Empire. In other respects, however, all their political activities after 1879 were based on the existing constitution. They endeavored above all to secure for the Czech nation the fundamental conditions essential for its political, cultural and economic progress,

and thereby to increase its political importance in the Habsburg Empire. During the first few years after their entry into the Reichsrat, the Czech deputies, acting in concert with the old Bohemian nobility, soon became with them an important component of the Conservative majority upon which the government of Count Taaffe relied for many years. In this way they secured for their nation some valuable concessions, especially in the sphere of education—the reestablishment of the Czech University in 1882, etc.—and in the matter of language. On account, however, of their alliance with the Conservative Poles and Germans and on account of their opposition to the nationally aggressive German Liberals, they were forced into the sphere of political conservatism which could not in the long run satisfy the masses, brought up, as they had been, on the ideas of liberalism, of intellectual and political liberty and of social progress. Popular dissatisfaction with this policy of the “Old Czech” party then in power, at the head of which was Francis L. Rieger, the son-in-law and spiritual heir of Palacký, was voiced by a number of younger politicians: notably the brothers Edward and Julius Grégr, who were given the name of “Young Czechs.” This party, which originated from opposition to the “state rights” radicalism of the Old Czechs and to their passive policy, later on in coalition reproached the Old Czechs, when they began to pursue political activity, with the nobility, with a betrayal of the principles of political and cultural liberalism, and an excessive disposition to yield in national matters. These charges found a ready echo among the Czech masses. In 1889 the Young Czech party gained a great triumph in the elections to

the Diet of Bohemia. After the unsuccessful settlement with the Germans in 1890, in which the Old Czechs had been persuaded into making great concessions, the Young Czech party gained further popularity by its opposition to this settlement, and in the elections to the Reichsrat in 1891 defeated the Old Czechs so completely that from that moment it took over the leadership in Czech policy. Three politicians of the group of so-called Realists were also elected as supporters of the Young Czech program. Professor T. G. Masaryk, Professor Joseph Kaizl and Dr. Karel Kramář. While Masaryk two years later resigned his seat and in 1900 founded a party of his own known as the People's party, and in 1907 was again elected to the Reichsrat as an independent, Kaizl and Kramář remained deputies of the Young Czech party. After the death of Dr. Kaizl, who for a short time in 1901, was Austrian Minister of Finance, Kramář became the real leader of the party.

Its policy differed from that formerly pursued by the Old Czech party in its looser ties with the old Bohemian nobility, in its political and cultural liberalism, and in its greater regard for the interests of the masses of the population. Otherwise the Young Czech party followed in the footsteps of the Old Czechs in endeavoring to obtain minor concessions for the Czech nation through a moderate policy and sometimes through direct participation in the government, and by promoting the internal political, economic and cultural strength of the Czech nation. An important means of augmenting the political power of the nation, adopted by the Young Czechs as it had previously been by the Old Czechs, was a systematic endeavor to secure a just proportion

of posts for Czechs in the main offices of state. The Young Czechs further endeavored to secure for the Czech and Slav elements in general an appropriate representation in the legislative bodies, especially in the Reichsrat, by the extension of the suffrage to those classes of the population hitherto excluded from the franchise. For the Young Czechs this was not only a matter of principle inherent in the character of their party; they were also actuated by a desire to secure for the non-German nations of Austria a representation in the Reichsrat at Vienna proportionate to their numbers, and thus to break down the existing unjust preponderance of the German element. Ignoring the objections of those who upheld historic rights on principle and were disposed to think that the active participation of Czech deputies in the matter of parliamentary suffrage reform weakened their position as based on the historic rights of Bohemia, which could not be brought into harmony with the existence of this central legislative body—the Reichsrat—the Young Czechs took an enthusiastic part in the struggle for universal suffrage and contributed substantially to its triumphant outcome in 1907. Czech policy thus became definitively emancipated from the support of the old Bohemian nobility, to whom the former electoral system had given a disproportionately strong position in Parliament. Universal suffrage, on the contrary, brought the broad masses of the Czechs, especially the working classes, hitherto influenced in very one-sided fashion by the catchwords of international socialism, into closer touch with the cause of Czech national aspirations and prepared them for the subsequent common struggle for the fulfillment of those aspirations.

Although Czech policy during the last few decades prior to the Great War diverged more and more from the strict "state rights" program—the historic right of the Kingdom of Bohemia to independence—which only a small group of Czech politicians never ceased to proclaim, and although the Czechs took their stand increasingly upon the existing constitutional conditions as established since the political Settlement with Hungary, and by their participation in legislative activity and by their influence on the central administration of state themselves strengthened the constitutional and administrative union of the Bohemian Lands with the other Cisleithanian provinces of the Habsburg Empire, this policy, nevertheless, did not bar the way of the Czech nation to the political liberty and independence to which it never ceased to aspire. On the contrary, by securing the necessary conditions for a successful development of its intellectual and material resources, this policy contributed in no small measure to the fact that at the moment of world crisis the Czech nation was able to undertake a successful fight for the attainment of its great aim.

The final success of the struggle, however, was prepared above all by the general economic and cultural progress of the Czech nation which took place during the last fifty years preceding the Great War. The economic development of the Bohemian territories during this period may be gauged from the growth of trade and industry. After a period of rapidly rising industrial prosperity in the sixties, accompanied by unsound and indeed frivolous speculation, came the great crash of 1873, but after a time, especially from the nineties onward, a new and mighty development of

industrial and commercial enterprise took place, in which, of course, the German element, supported by capital from Vienna and the German Empire, always had a great preponderance over the Czech element. At the same time agriculture, profiting from the progress of the period, continually improved its methods, and though it suffered from time to time from Hungarian and overseas competition, it remained the cardinal component of the economic life of the Bohemian Lands. Apart from the farming done by the large landowners, who were mostly nobles partly of Czech, partly of German nationality, but usually indifferent in racial matters, the Czech element, being stronger on the land than the German element, possessed in agriculture a safe economic basis. By their assiduity the Czechs penetrated slowly yet increasingly into industry, trade and finance in which they built for themselves a strong position that later on, after their state had acquired independence, became the starting point and a buttress for its successful economic policy.

The effects of greater political freedom that followed the fall of Bach's absolutism in the Habsburg Empire manifested themselves distinctly in the Bohemian Lands and especially in the life of the Czech nation. In the sixties began the development of a free political Czech press—in 1861 the *Národní Listy* was founded—and of Czech social activities—in 1862 the "Sokol" Gymnastic Association and various clubs, etc. were inaugurated, "Besedy" and choral societies organized, and so on. Czech literature, too, at that period began a new existence. The literature of the period, represented by a number of brilliant poets, first by Neruda, then by Čech, Vrchlický and Zeyer, and finally by

Machar, Sova and Březinn, Bezruč and Dyk, and by a number of prose writers of distinction and popularity, such as Holeček and Jirásek, extended the intellectual horizon of the Czechs and raised the artistic level of Czech literary composition, while at the same time it did not cease to awaken and to strengthen the national Czech consciousness which at times manifested itself in strong Slav sentiment. Czech painting and sculpture, which found their best representatives in the painter Mánes and the sculptor Myslbek, passed through a similar development, and in their best productions have attained world level. The genius of Bedřich Smetana has given to Czech music, which till then had not expressed itself with any great originality, a national character, and his works, together with those of Antonín Dvořák, have made Czech music admired and popular throughout the whole civilized world. Czech science and learning, cultivated hitherto by only a few outstanding minds—Palacký, Šafařík, Tomek, Presl, Purkyně and others—secured through the reestablishment of the independent Czech University at Prague in 1882 a solid and broad foundation. It was chiefly due to the influence of the university that the rational critical tendency—scientific “realism”—in all spheres of scientific research gained preponderance over the older scientific romanticism. The great scientific discussions which took place in the eighties concerning the forged “ancient” Czech manuscripts—those of Králové Dvůr and Zelená Hora—conducted by a group of Czech scholars led by the university professors T. G. Masaryk, J. Gebauer, philologist, and J. Goll, historian, won a great triumph for scientific truth over romantic superstition and left deep traces

in the later development not only of Czech science and learning but also of Czech intellectual life generally.

Czech schools increased during the fifty years prior to the Great War both in number and in kind, many technical and special schools of all grades being founded, as well as in their general standard of efficiency. Most of the schools were founded, maintained and managed by local government bodies—the Lands, district, borough and parish authorities—in which the representatives of the Czech masses themselves possessed a more or less independent right of decision. Many Czech schools in the racially mixed districts were built and maintained by a private organization, the “Ústřední Matice Školská” (School Society), which was founded in 1889. In the same way the National Theater at Prague was built by a private society with funds raised by voluntary subscription. It had to be erected twice—first in 1881, and again in 1883 following the destruction of the first building by fire. The Czech Academy of Science, Literature and Arts was founded in 1880 by the Czech philanthropist Hlávka. By systematic and conscientious work both in the local government bodies, in so far as they were in Czech hands, and in private clubs, societies and other mutual-aid organizations, the Czech nation prepared itself for a free existence in an independent state of its own perhaps even more thoroughly than by the systematic and for the most part important activities of its representatives in the legislative assemblies and in the lower and higher offices of state.

The Slovak branch of the Czechoslovak nation was deprived even of these opportunities. On the contrary, it deteriorated considerably during the last few decades

before the war. The political turmoil which began in the Habsburg Empire after the downfall of the Bach Absolutism, and in the midst of which the Magyars secured the recognition of the independence of their state, resulted for the Slovaks merely in a permission to found an association for the publication of Slovak books, the "Slovenská Matica," established in 1862 at Turčianský Svätý Martin, and in the inauguration of a few Slovak grammar schools. But in 1874, a few years after the Settlement, the Hungarian Government, aiming at the complete Magyarization of the Slovaks, closed these Slovak grammar schools, and dissolved the Slovak Matica in 1875. After that, especially following the passing of the Apponyi Education Act in 1907, all Slovak schools were gradually transformed into purely Magyar institutions. The Catholic and the Protestant churches, too ruthlessly dominated by the state power, spread the Magyar spirit among the Slovaks. Thus, for instance, the Hungarian Government almost invariably appointed uncompromising Magyars as bishops of the Catholic dioceses in Slovakia. As the Slovaks, in so far as they preserved their nationality, were almost entirely excluded from participation in the legislature—during the years immediately preceding the war they had 1 to 3 deputies in the Hungarian Parliament instead of the 45 to which they were entitled by virtue of their numbers,—as well as from the more important offices of state, literature and a few newspapers finally remained the only manifestation of their national life. Some of the Slovak writers attained a high literary standard, among them the poets Hurban-Vajanský and Országh-Hviezdoslav, but they were unable to evoke any deep response from

the masses of the people who had been brought up in Magyar schools, or had evaded education from a natural aversion from these Magyar schools. Nevertheless, from the nineties on a great deal was accomplished in Slovakia both in the economic sphere and in that of popular education by the younger generation of Slovaks, educated, as they had been, mostly in Bohemia and following the example of Czech self-reliance. At the same time a consciousness of racial unity with the Czechs and an endeavor for a rapprochement with them spread among the Slovaks.

On the other hand, the natural growth of the Czech nation in the Bohemian Lands caused its relations to the German inhabitants of those territories to deteriorate. Already in 1848 the brief joint struggle of the two nationalities against the absolutism of Vienna was followed by a deep cleft between them as soon as the Czechs began to claim national and linguistic rights proportionate to their numbers and historical significance, whereas the Germans were more and more actuated by a desire for union with the great German nation across the frontiers. The same thing happened again after the fall of Bach Absolutism. The joint action of the Czechs and Germans in their struggle for the recognition of the right of the Bohemian State to autonomy soon gave place to a serious and often passionate struggle between the two nationalities. The more the Czechs increased in natural strength and dislodged the Germans from the positions seized by them in the past and for a long time maintained by artificial means, and the more obvious the permanence of these Czech successes became, the more estranged became the Germans from the idea of the unity and political

independence of the Bohemian Lands. They began to strive for such an adjustment of public administration of those lands as would convert the districts with a German-speaking majority into an independent administrative German territory in which the Czechs would not be allowed to settle: geschlossenes Gebiet. The dazzling progress of the German Empire and the simultaneous rise of aggressive German nationalism tempted the Bohemian Germans to look more and more to the Germans of Germany for their salvation. The closest possible alliance of the Habsburg Monarchy with the German Empire, which the Czechs vainly opposed, was therefore the fundamental article of their political program. The government of Vienna exerted an ever-declining resistance to these endeavors for a closer alliance between Austria and Germany, though they represented a danger for the future of the Habsburg Monarchy equal to, if not greater than, the menace to the future of the Czech nation. The opposition of the Czechs to Vienna thereby, of course, became all the more profound and intense.

CHAPTER XIII

The Great War

1914-1918

IN SPITE of all the wrongs and all the disappointments which the Czechs had had to endure since the succession of the Habsburg dynasty to the throne of Bohemia and especially since the beginning of the modern political era in the Habsburg Monarchy, they did not on the whole abandon—until the war—the idea that a better future for their nation could be attained and assured within the framework of that monarchy. They did not cease to cherish the hope that they would, after all, succeed in reconstructing Austria according to the ideals of Palacký, so that it would become a real homeland to all the nations living in it, and provide all the conditions essential for their development. In internal policy the Czechs strove, therefore, to break down the dominance of the German element and to secure appropriate political influence for the non-German, particularly the Slav races, while in regard to foreign policy they opposed a too close alliance with the German Empire, in which they rightly saw an undue dependence of Austria-Hungary on Germany, and at the same time they strove for a better understanding between Austria and the Slav states, especially Russia and Serbia. They did not seriously consider separation from the monarchy, if only because there was no state in the vicinity on which they could lean or which they could join, and they could not

regard the achievement of complete independence and sovereignty as either possible or desirable without a radical change in the political map of Europe—a change that could not be counted upon.

During the years immediately preceding the war the relations of the Czechs to the Habsburg Empire became more and more strained under the influence of internal developments—the growing tendency to yield to the German spirit of expansion—and of external events—the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, and all the subsequent complications of that step—which preceded and led up to the war. The war estranged the Czechs from the empire completely. Even at the moment, July 29, when Austria declared war on Serbia, and subsequently on France and Russia, thus kindling that terrible conflagration of which she was herself to become the victim, there were probably few Czechs who were whole-heartedly on the side of Austria.

The duty laid upon the Czechs of fighting against two Slav states and nations to whom they were drawn by sentiments of romantic brotherhood, and against France toward which they had always entertained sentiments of profound sympathy, and where they had some of their best friends—notable among them being Professor Denis, the author of the great work on Bohemian history—was a terrible infliction for all patriotic Czechs. The well-known utterance of Bethmann-Hollweg, the German Chancellor, to the effect that the war was a war between Germans and Slavs was not calculated to make this bitter duty the easier for them. From the very outset it was, moreover, clear to the Czechs that a victory for Austria-Hungary in alliance

with Germany would signify not merely the destruction—perhaps forever—of their dream of the restoration of the full political independence of the lands of the Bohemian Crown but also a serious deterioration in their existing political position. On the other hand, from the defeat of Austria-Hungary they were justified in expecting the fulfillment of their political aspirations either within the framework of the Habsburg Empire or upon its ruins.

The Czechs, therefore, could not enter into the war either with enthusiasm or with a desire for the victory of the Austro-Hungarian arms with which they themselves were equipped, and some of them soon declared their sentiments openly. Many of the Czech troops went over to the enemies of the Habsburg Monarchy, voluntarily allowing themselves to be taken prisoners. Several Czech politicians, in particular Professor Masaryk and the young university lecturer, Dr. Eduard Beneš, proceeded abroad in the early months following the outbreak of war in order there to initiate publicity and diplomatic struggle for the political liberation of their nation, even though this should involve the destruction of the Habsburg Empire. Those, too, who remained at home gravitated more and more away from Austria. They were encouraged in their opposition to that country not only by the tidings which reached them of the activities of their compatriots who had gone over to the enemy but also by the hostile attitude of the Vienna government to everything Czech, by the cruel persecution of the Czech press and of suspected persons—the arrest of the leaders of the Young Czechs, Dr. Kramář and Dr. Rašín, for high treason in the spring of 1915; by the suppression of

the Czech national tradition in the schools and of everything that recalled the former independence of Bohemia—on the occasion of a revision of the common imperial coat-of-arms in October, 1915, an imperial rescript provided that the title of "Austrian Lands" should be applied to the Cisleithanian territories, while the Bohemian Crown and the royal title of Bohemia were removed from the coat-of-arms and its description, by the introduction of German as the official language in purely Czech districts, and so on.

All this led to a complete inner estrangement of the overwhelming majority of the Czech nation from the Habsburg Empire already during the early period of the Great War. Neither the efforts of some few Czech politicians who could not believe that Austria would collapse and were eager to preserve for their nation the opportunity of good relations with the Habsburg dynasty after the war, nor the introduction of a more moderate régime following the death of the old Emperor Francis Joseph, whose successor was his young great-nephew Charles, could check this elemental trend. In fact, the movement spread also among the Slovaks in Hungary. We have seen that in spite of centuries-old separation from the Czechs, in spite of the language schism caused between the two branches of the Czechoslovak nation by the introduction of a separate Slovak literary language in the middle of the nineteenth century, the consciousness of national unity with the Czechs was never lost in Slovakia. On the contrary, it had visibly acquired new intensity just before the Great War. This sentiment was especially marked among those Slovaks who, not satisfied with study in the Magyar schools of Hungary or having been expelled

from them for political reasons, had studied in Bohemia or elsewhere beyond the frontiers of Hungary. It was also strong among those who had made their homes overseas, especially in America where Slovak immigrants to the number of more than half a million lived in close contact with the numerous settlements of Czech immigrants. Finally, the war itself gave an impulse to closer ties between Czechs and Slovaks both on the battlefields and in the prisoners' camps. Thus it came about that, in the Czechoslovak campaign abroad for independence, Slovaks like Štefánik and Osuský cooperated with Czechs like Masaryk and Beneš, that the Slovaks contributed considerable numbers of recruits to the Czechoslovak legions, and that in the revolutionary movement of the Czechs at home several Slovaks took an active part. A natural rapprochement between Czechs and Slovaks who for centuries had been artificially separated from one another took place in those dark moments of fateful decision, and manifested itself outwardly in the fact that they began consistently to call themselves by the common designation of "Czechoslovaks."

The spontaneous and unorganized manifestations of Czechoslovak sympathies for the Allied enemies of Austria-Hungary, which had occurred both at home and on the battlefields from the very beginning of the war, soon gave way to systematic revolutionary activities in the Allied countries and at home. As early as 1915 a Czech "Committee of Action" was established in the Entente countries, its members including Professor Masaryk and Dr. Beneš in addition to other Czechs who had gone abroad. Supported by the colonies of Czechs and Slovaks previously settled in the

Allied countries, and maintaining contact with a revolutionary organization at home, known as the "Maffia" Society, this Committee proclaimed to the whole world the revolt of the Czechoslovak nation against Austria-Hungary. At the beginning of 1916 the Committee was converted into a "National Council of the Bohemian Lands" — *Conseil National des Pays Tcheques* — with Paris as its headquarters. In this National Council, Milan Štefánik, a Slovak who had lived in France prior to the war and had devoted himself to the study of astronomy, occupied a prominent position alongside Masaryk and Beneš. The main aim of the National Council, which had branches in the various Allied countries, was to win over the responsible political authorities among the Allies for the idea of complete independence of the Czechs and Slovaks by the establishment of a Czechoslovak State entirely dissociated from the Habsburg Empire. The accomplishment of this purpose was by no means easy for it involved the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary which enjoyed a comparatively large measure of sympathy in the Allied countries. The Habsburg Empire was regarded there more or less as a victim of the seductions of German imperialism, and its preservation was looked upon almost as a European necessity. Hopes were also entertained that it would perhaps be possible at a suitable moment to detach it from Germany and thus deal a vital blow at the strongest enemy of the Entente.

Undeterred by these difficulties, the Czechs first set out to organize a fighting force of their own to fight side by side with the Allied armies against Austria-Hungary and her allies. The first effort, and the most effective, was made in Russia. A volunteer corps, con-

sisting of Czechs and Slovaks settled in Russia, was formed, and its ranks subsequently recruited from among the Czech and Slovak prisoners of war, of whom there were soon large numbers. This corps rendered valuable military service to the Russian army. It was not, however, till after the first Russian revolution, when the Czech detachments had distinguished themselves at the Battle of Zborow on July 2, 1917, during the great Russian offensive, that in the autumn of 1917 an independent Czechoslovak army corps under the command of its own officers and subordinated to the National Council at Paris was created. Toward the close of 1917 France, too, agreed to the formation of an independent Czechoslovak army, an example which was followed in the spring of 1918 by Italy, where thousands of Czech prisoners were assembled. Individual detachments of the Czechoslovak forces soon distinguished themselves on the various battle fronts. In particular, the Czechoslovak legions in Russia, by virtue of their great and successful campaign against the Soviets in Siberia in the summer of 1918, attracted the attention of the whole world.

Meanwhile the Czechs at home had abandoned their original passivity and adopted more determined tactics. The May Manifesto of Czech Writers of 1917 was the first of a series of Czech declarations of program, and these manifestoes became increasingly emphatic. Under the effect of the writers' manifesto a unanimous declaration made by all the Czech deputies at the opening of the Reichsrat on May 30, 1917, contained a demand for the reorganization of the Habsburg empire in the form of a Federation composed of autonomous national states enjoying complete equality, one of

which states was to comprise the historical Lands of the Bohemian Crown together with Slovakia. Not even the imperial amnesty declared on July 2, which liberated the majority of political prisoners, including Dr. Kramář and Dr. Rašín, whom a court martial had condemned to death for high treason, held the Czechs back from a course of increasing revolutionary activity. On January 6, 1918, all the Czech deputies of the Reichsrat and the Diets of the Lands issued the memorable "Twelfth Night" Declaration in which they emphatically declared that the Czech nation was striving for a sovereign state of its own "within the frontiers of its historical Lands and including its Slovak branch", they rejected every suggestion of the question of the Czechoslovak right of self-determination being solved within the framework of the Austrian or the Hungarian constitution, but they did not as yet renounce the Habsburg dynasty or reject the possibility of creating a Federation of Austrian States. Three months later—April 13, 1918—representatives of all classes of the Czech nation assembled at Prague to take a public and ceremonial oath to the effect that they would never cease their struggle for independence till victory was theirs. The claim for a union of the Bohemian Lands with Slovakia in an independent state within the framework of the Habsburg Empire was gradually extended till it became an open demand for complete separation from that empire—a demand which was even put forward at the beginning of October by several of the Czech deputies in the Vienna Reichsrat. From July, 1918, on a special National Committee composed of representatives of all the Czech political parties and of some Slovaks, and presided over by Dr. Kramář,

who had been amnestied the previous year, began to make preparations for the expected new political order. Political conditions in Hungary did not allow similar manifestations of the national will and similar open preparations for an independent Czechoslovak State to be made on Slovak soil, but on the initiative of one of the foremost Slovak leaders, Dr. Šrobár, a manifesto was issued by the Social-Democratic workers of Slovakia on May 1, 1918, demanding the right of self-determination for the branch of the Czechoslovak nation living in Hungary. On the 30th of the same month, on the occasion of a visit paid by Professor Masaryk to Pittsburgh, representatives of the American Czech and Slovak organizations issued a manifesto approving of the union of the Bohemian Lands with Slovakia in an independent state—according to this document it was to be a democratic republic in which Slovakia was to enjoy a certain measure of autonomy. After June, 1918, the indefatigable diplomatic efforts of the Czechoslovak National Council in Paris began to bear fruit. In that month the French Government recognized the National Council as the supreme organ representing the interests of the Czechoslovak nation, and as the basis of the future Czechoslovak Government. Similar declarations of recognition were issued by the British, American, Japanese and Italian Governments during August and September. On October 14, Dr. Beneš, in his capacity as secretary-general of the National Council, notified the Allied Governments of the decision of the Council to appoint an interim Czechoslovak Government—Masaryk, Beneš, Štefánik—and before the end of October this government had received *de jure* recognition from all the Allied powers.

At Washington on October 18 the independence of Czechoslovakia was proclaimed by Professor Masaryk in solemn form, and the main principles enunciated on which the Constitution of the future democratic Republic was to be based

In these circumstances the last desperate efforts of the Vienna court to save the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were doomed to failure. The Manifesto issued by the Emperor Charles on October 16 offering the nations of the Habsburg Empire a reconstruction of its Cisleithanian territories in the form of a federation of autonomous national states was rejected *in toto* by the Czechs not only through the National Committee but also by the mouth of their deputies in the Reichsrat. When, on October 21, the answer of the President of the United States to the Austro-Hungarian offer of peace was published—an answer in which Wilson declared that the decision as to the future of the nations of Austria-Hungary lay with those nations themselves—the leading Czech deputies, with Dr Kramář, the chairman of the National Committee at their head, proceeded, with the consent of the Emperor himself, to Geneva on October 24, to come to an understanding with Dr Beneš, already recognized as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the provisional Czechoslovak Government, touching on the course now to be taken.

During their absence the independence of Czechoslovakia was suddenly proclaimed at home on October 28. The final impulse to this event came from the Note by which Count Andrassy, the new Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, made known to the nations of Austria-Hungary the answer of President Wilson and intimated that the government would

accept the terms of that answer. The people of Prague saw in this an official recognition of the full political freedom of the Czechoslovak nation, and with inexpressible enthusiasm began to remove all traces of Austrian rule and to celebrate the nation's liberation. The National Council which, in the absence of Dr. Kramář, was presided over by the circumspect leader of the Agrarian party, Antonín Švehla, and the soul of which was the far-sighted and energetic Alois Rašín, was influenced by these popular manifestations, and without awaiting the return of its delegates from Geneva at once took over, as provisional government, the conduct of public affairs in the liberated state. The army and the state officials submitted on the whole without resistance. The independent Czechoslovak State thus called into actual being was adhered to a couple of days later by Slovakia, the Slovak National Council at Turčianský Svätý Martin, presided over by Matúš Dula, an old Slovak patriot, issuing a proclamation to this effect on October 30. The severance of the two branches of the Czechoslovak nation from the Austro-Hungarian Empire was thus accomplished, and the independent Czechoslovak state became a reality.

CHAPTER XIV

The Beginnings of the Czechoslovak Republic

THE first great task, the first and urgent need of the new state, was to unify the work accomplished in the struggle for independence abroad and at home, to give the country a government which should be the expression of that unification, and should, at the same time, decide upon the form of constitution to be adopted. As early as November 14, 1918, there met for this purpose the National Assembly, composed, like the National Committee, of representatives of all the Czech political parties and of the Slovaks. At its very first session the Assembly solemnly declared the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty deprived of all rights to the Bohemian Lands, proclaimed the Czechoslovak state as a Republic, and elected as its first president Thomas G. Masaryk, who, however, did not return to his liberated country till December 21, 1918. Simultaneously the National Assembly chose the first government of the Czechoslovak Republic. Dr. Kramář, the chairman of the National Committee, became Prime Minister, and the Cabinet also included two members of the interim government in Paris—Dr. Beneš as Minister of Foreign Affairs, General Štefánik as Minister of War. Both of them, like Professor Masaryk, were abroad. Beneš did not return home permanently until the conclusion of the negotiations for peace in Paris during which, in company with Dr. Kramář, he represented Czecho-

slovakia. Štefánik, who had spent the close of 1918 with the Czechoslovak troops in Siberia, met a tragic end in May, 1919. The airplane in which he was returning to his native land crashed just as it crossed the frontier into Slovakia.

The peace negotiations in Paris, which commenced in January, 1919, and the main results of which were the treaties of peace made between 27 Allied and associated powers—among them Czechoslovakia—on the one hand, and Germany (at Versailles on June 28, 1919), Austria (at Saint-Germain en Laye on September 10, 1919) and Hungary (at Trianon on June 4, 1920) secured for Czechoslovakia not only general international recognition but also the delimitation of her frontiers. The Czechoslovak delegates had no easy task in this connection. The restorers of Czechoslovak state independence, of course, took it from the outset as certain that Czechoslovakia would consist of the entire historic territory of the Bohemian Crown as it existed finally under the Habsburg Monarchy, that is, of Bohemia, Moravia and "Austrian" Silesia, and that to this historic territory would be added the Slovak portion of Hungary. It never entered into the minds of serious Czechs to make an attempt to secure for Czechoslovakia such former Lands of the Bohemian Crown as had been lost in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—the two Lusatias and the greater part of Silesia. Ethnographical reasons made certain rectifications of the frontier with Germany desirable, but all that was attained was that the Treaty of Versailles detached from Germany the small area of Hlučínsko (Glatz), 314 square kilometers in extent, with a population of 45,000, mostly Slavs, and incorporated it with

Czechoslovakia. Similarly, ethnographical and historical reasons as well as considerations of communications led to the incorporation of two small areas in Lower Austria with Czechoslovakia—the old Vitorazsko near Gmünd, and the district round Valtice; altogether 211 square kilometers with a population of some 20,000, mostly Czechoslovaks.

Two attempts, however, were made to sever a considerable area from the three historical Lands of the Bohemian Crown. One, made by the German population, was unsuccessful; the other, made by the Poles, deprived Czechoslovakia of a part of the Těšín territory. The Germans, settled in the Bohemian Lands for centuries, came forward, on the collapse of the old *Austria-Hungary*, with the demand that on the basis of self-determination they should be incorporated with the new and purely German Austria. Immediately following the proclamation of Czechoslovak independence there was formed out of the districts in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia possessing a majority of German inhabitants four small Lands—the two largest were known as "Deutschböhmen" and "Sudetenland" respectively—which declared themselves autonomous provinces of the new Austrian Republic. Altogether these four Lands comprised about one-third of the total area of the three historical Lands of the Bohemian Crown, but geographically they were either absolutely disconnected or at least quite inadequately connected with one another, while they were for the most part entirely separated from the Austrian Republic by Czech territories. This geographically impossible "state," though it was claimed by the Austrian Republic as part and parcel of its territory, proved, as could have

been foreseen, incapable of continued existence. The Czechoslovak Government occupied those areas in a brief space with insignificant forces, nowhere meeting with serious opposition from the inhabitants. After the middle of December, 1918, all the German districts of the Bohemian Lands were thus actually subject to the Prague Government. At the Peace Conference, Austria claimed, it is true, sovereignty over these areas, but the claim was rejected and their appurtenance to Czechoslovakia received international recognition without reservations of any kind.

The district of Těšín which the Poles claimed for themselves had been a permanent part of the old Bohemian State from the fourteenth century, and finally, with Opava and Krnov, had formed the "Duchy of Silesia," the sole relic of the great Silesia of which Bohemia had been deprived in the eighteenth century. The majority of the inhabitants were Poles, or at least a mixture of Polish and Czech blood, while the rest consisted of Czechs and Germans. The Poles wished to incorporate Těšín with their new state, while the Czechs on historical and economic grounds insisted that it belonged of right to the Czechoslovak State. Vain efforts were made even during the war to arrive at agreement, and as soon as Austria-Hungary collapsed the Poles, at the beginning of December, occupied almost the whole of Těšín. The Czechoslovak Government, unable to admit the state of affairs created by this action, took military steps and recovered a part of Těšín. At this stage the Peace Conference intervened and, fixing a line of demarcation between the two states, reserved to itself the right of making a definitive decision touching Těšín. Fresh negotiations

between Poles and Czechs having failed, the Peace Conference decided that a plebiscite should take place. Before this decision was put into effect, the two parties agreed to have the dispute settled by arbitration. This was done in July, 1920. The eastern part of Těšín was awarded to Poland, the western part with an important section of the Bohumín-Košice railway connecting the Lands of the Bohemian Crown with Slovakia and comprising a considerable area of the Těšín coal field remained in the possession of the Czechoslovak Republic.

A difficult task was the determination of the state frontiers in the Slovak portion of the Czechoslovak Republic, for the Slovak districts of old Hungary had never formed a united Land or indeed a single administrative area, but had been split up among several Hungarian counties. Slovakia thus did not possess precise historical frontiers and on account of the extensive racial promiscuity the ethnographical boundaries were nowhere adequately distinct. Moreover, the entire administration of the Slovak districts was in the hands of those devoted to Hungary and hostile to the Slovaks and to the Czechoslovak Republic. Thus, when the political leaders of the Slovaks proclaimed the union of Slovakia with the Republic, the Prague Government had to enter upon a struggle with the Hungarian Government for the actual power in Slovakia. It was not until December, 1918, when the Allies fixed a demarcation line in Slovakia between Czechoslovakia and the new Hungary, and ordered the Hungarians to evacuate Slovakia, that the Slovak districts could be successively occupied by the Czechoslovak authorities and Czechoslovak troops. Before the

Peace Conference had definitively settled the frontiers of Slovakia, the Hungarians made one more bold attempt to regain possession of the country by force. Under the Communist régime of Bela Kun a Red army invaded Slovakia in May, 1919, garrisoned as it was by inadequate Czechoslovak forces, and seized large areas of Slovak territory. By order of the Allies, however, the Hungarians were soon compelled to stop their attack and to evacuate Slovakia. Immediately afterwards the Peace Conference fixed the definitive frontiers of Slovakia which differed but slightly from the demarcation line of December, 1918, and they were confirmed by the Treaty of Trianon. On the north against Poland, Slovakia preserved, on the whole, the historical frontiers of Old Hungary. There, too, the Poles claimed a portion of the frontier area inhabited by a population speaking Polish, and at the time they obtained the eastern part of Těšín they succeeded in securing also small sectors of the two Slovak counties of Orava and Spiš with a number of Polish villages.

In addition to Slovakia there was taken from Old Hungary and attached to the Czechoslovak Republic the Ruthenian territory lying to the east of Slovakia and now known as Carpathian Ruthenia. The impulse to this step came from the Ruthenians who had emigrated to America before the war from this area which had been so criminally neglected by the Hungarian Government. Before the end of the war they had won President Wilson over to the plan of attaching the Ruthenian territories in Hungary to the Czechoslovak Republic as an autonomous area. This project was also favorably received among the Ruthenians at home, and was put into effect in the spring of 1919 when the

major part of Carpathian Ruthenia was occupied by Czechoslovak troops. The adhesion of this territory to the Czechoslovak Republic was further ratified by the Peace Conference. Its special position within the framework of the Czechoslovak State is assured by a Convention of September 10, 1919, under the terms of which Czechoslovakia undertook to give Carpathian Ruthenia the widest possible measure of autonomy compatible with the integrity of the Czechoslovak Republic. In view of the immensely complicated nature of conditions prevailing in this most easterly portion of Czechoslovakia—the cultural and political neglect of the Slav population, the disputes between the Russian Orthodox and the Ruthenian or Ukrainian, Uniate parties, etc,—the fulfillment of this undertaking can only be a gradual process.

On the entire territory of Czechoslovakia as thus fixed within definitive frontiers and possessing a total area of 140,408 square kilometers (Bohemia 62,064 sq km, Moravia 22,315 sq km, Silesia with Hlučínsko 4,452 sq km, Slovakia 48,033 sq km, Carpathian Ruthenia 12,644 sq km) the population, according to the census of 1921, was 13,612,000, and according to that of 1930 it was 14,732,644. According to nationality there were registered in 1930 Czechoslovaks 9,688,943, or 66.92 per cent of the whole, Germans 3,231,718, or 22.32 per cent, Magyars 692,121, or 4.78 per cent, Ruthenians 549,043, or 3.79 per cent, Jews 186,474, or 1.29 per cent, Poles 81,741, or 0.56 per cent, other nationalities 49,465, and foreigners 250,031, of whom 94,437 were Germans. Thus the Czechoslovak Republic contains, in addition to the Czechoslovaks, a relatively large number of inhabitants of other nation-

alities. Inclusive of the population of Carpathian Ruthenia, which has now, of course, a special position within the Republic and in time will enjoy a still larger degree of autonomy, 66.92 per cent of the inhabitants are Czechoslovaks, and 33.08 per cent other nationalities. On the other hand, a fairly large number of Czechs and Slovaks remained in the new Austria and in Hungary. In the Austrian Republic, and particularly at Vienna, from which city some tens, indeed, hundreds of thousands of Czechoslovaks migrated to Czechoslovakia after the establishment of the Republic, there still live about 100,000 Czechs and Slovaks. In post-war Hungary the official census of 1920 showed 141,000 Slovaks domiciled in the country, and there are also small Slovak settlements in Jugoslavia and Rumania, Czech colonies in Poland (Volhynia) and in Russia. Of the immense number of Czechs and Slovaks who emigrated to the United States of America before the war and settled there permanently, many still preserve a consciousness of their origin and a lively sense of their racial adherence to the Czechoslovak nation. Altogether the number of Czechoslovaks living beyond the frontiers of the Czechoslovak Republic is estimated at 2,000,000, and of these 1,382,079 are settled in the United States.

To insure the young Republic in the form confirmed by the Peace Treaties against all outward danger was the first task facing those responsible for the foreign policy of the Czechoslovak Republic. Such a danger existed above all in the open endeavors of the Magyars to recover the former Hungarian territories which had been incorporated in Czechoslovakia. Against this danger, accentuated as it was by the attempts of the

ex-Emperor Charles to regain the Hungarian throne in March and October, 1921, Czechoslovakia sought support among the states whose interests were similar to her own. Thus there was effected an agreement for a defensive alliance first between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, in August, 1920, and later between Czechoslovakia and Rumania, in April, 1921, in this way was established the permanent alliance among those three states known as the Little Entente. Besides common defense against attempts to overthrow the new political order in Central Europe the Little Entente made it its task to work for the pacification and consolidation of the new Central Europe by means of peaceful coöperation among all the states of that area in the economic, cultural and political spheres. At the same time the Little Entente strove to maintain friendship with the main Allied powers and found a reliable pillar of support in France, a country which had no less interest than the Little Entente itself in preserving the status established by the Peace Treaties. From the outset, however, Czechoslovakia aimed and with success, at a good understanding not only with Poland, with which country all conflicts touching frontiers were settled in a peaceful manner but also with Austria and Germany. The relations with Austria after the early bitterness and difficulties had been overcome, evolved in friendly fashion, especially when Czechoslovakia, in 1922, gave Austria effective aid in her then financial crisis. The relations of Czechoslovakia with Germany, which were marked from the beginning by absolute correctness on both sides and were never marred by serious conflicts were further improved by a favorable turn in the relations between Germany

and France as reflected in the Locarno Pacts of 1925.

The calm and practical solution of numerous, and often difficult, questions which naturally originated in the direct propinquity of Czechoslovakia to Germany and the Austrian Republic and in their unusually brisk and extensive commercial, transport and economic relations has equally contributed to the strengthening of good neighborly relations between Czechoslovakia and those two states. Nor has the failure of the attempt to create a customs union between Germany and Austria permanently marred those good relations.

From the very outset Czechoslovakia devoted herself with exemplary energy to the task of overcoming the numerous and extensive internal difficulties which naturally originated from the new conditions. In addition to the generally unfavorable consequences of the World War—moral and social upheaval, economic impoverishment, the duty of the states to make good the losses suffered by their populations in health and property, provision for the dependents of those who had fallen in the war, etc.—there were the serious problems which arose precisely from radical changes in the political conditions, from the collapse of the former homogeneous state and economic entity. Whereas in Austria and Hungary there existed large numbers of officials and army officers who had previously been employed on the territories of former Austria-Hungary, and for whom there was now no occupation, Czechoslovakia, on the other hand, suffered from a shortage in this respect. At the outset, until the various units of the Czechoslovak armies abroad could return home, she was practically without an army; she lacked, espe-

cially for the territories taken over from Hungary, a personnel of reliable officials acquainted with conditions there, and she was obliged to build up her central departments of state from the very foundations. In doing so she could rely only in some departments on the staff taken over with the former Austro-Hungarian offices of state, while in other departments, especially in the diplomatic service, there existed practically no personnel whatsoever of Czechoslovak nationality. A huge task likewise awaited Czechoslovakia in Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia where it was necessary to establish a network of elementary, secondary and technical schools with Slovak, Ruthenian (or Russian) and German as the medium of instruction, only Magyar schools, with insignificant exceptions, having previously existed there. This task was accomplished with great success, for during the first few years of the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic there were established two new universities, one for Moravia at Brno (Brünn) and the other for Slovakia at Bratislava, and a number of technical colleges: the College of Commerce at Prague, the College of Agriculture and Forestry and the Veterinary College at Brno. At the same time a number of new scientific research institutions were founded, among them the Masaryk Academy of Work, the Slav Institute and the Oriental Institute which, of course, could fully develop their activities only after the lapse of some little time.

Difficulties of a particularly weighty nature arose in the economic sphere from the dissolution of Austria-Hungary. A necessary consequence of that dissolution was the end of the customs and monetary unity among the individual portions of the former monarchy. The

independent states which had arisen on the ruins of the Old Empire at once began to restrict the free commercial relations which had hitherto existed among them by export and import prohibitions and duties. Each of these states became an independent customs area, each endeavored to check to the utmost the hitherto free import trade from the others, and at the same time to become as economically independent of them as was possible by intensifying and expanding its own domestic production. Czechoslovakia gradually adjusted her commercial relations with these states by means of regular commercial treaties, and it was also necessary to negotiate similar treaties with other states, especially the neighboring countries. The first step toward dissolving the joint currency hitherto existing for the whole territory of Austria-Hungary was taken by Czechoslovakia. She was driven to this step by the fact that Austria and Hungary continued, to their own disadvantage, to print paper money and thus conduct a policy of inflation. When Czechoslovakia failed in her efforts to check that process, she proceeded in March, 1919, to "stamp" all the notes of the Austro-Hungarian Bank found within her territories and to exclude all unstamped notes from circulation. Thus was created an independent Czechoslovak currency which from then on developed independently from the Austrian and Hungarian currencies. The rigorous financial policy, the foundations of which were laid by the first Czechoslovak Minister of Finance, Dr. Alois Rašín, was thus successful in protecting the country's currency from the almost complete debacle suffered by the Austrian and Hungarian currencies. Even the Czechoslovak crown, in the autumn of 1921

during the period of mobilization against the attempt of the Emperor Charles to return to Hungary, depreciated to almost one-twentieth of its original value, but by 1923 it had become stabilized, and since then it has maintained a value of slightly over one-sixth of that of the old Austro-Hungarian crown. It was not until early in 1934 that the development of world currency conditions, particularly the sharp depreciation of the American dollar and the English pound sterling, compelled the Czechoslovak finance authorities to lower the value of the Czechoslovak crown by 16.5 per cent, a step accomplished quite smoothly and without the slightest unfavorable reaction upon the state finances or the country's economy generally. Thanks to a strictly conducted financial policy Czechoslovakia was thus spared a complete devaluation of wealth invested in moneys and government bonds, a cruel impoverishment of the middle classes, convulsions in property ownership, and altogether all such grievous blows as currency inflation inflicted not only upon Austria and Hungary but also upon other countries, notably Germany. Czechoslovakia thus succeeded by her own efforts and without outside assistance in putting her finances in order, and creating a sound basis for the healthy development of her economic life. Even Czechoslovakia could not, of course, escape the unfavorable effects of the world economic crisis which during the past few years has succeeded the former state of general economic prosperity. Signs of this crisis began to manifest themselves with increased emphasis in the year 1930 in the form of restricted production, a sharp decline in foreign trade, an unfavorable trade balance, growing unemployment, and big

deficits in the working of the state railways, etc. Nevertheless, throughout this difficult period radical economies in public expenditure and a strict financial policy have enabled the stability of the Czechoslovak currency to be maintained, and have saved the country from the economic collapse to which several other states have fallen victim. Indications have increased of late that the worst of the crisis is over, and that the essential conditions for a gradual betterment of the financial and economic situation of Czechoslovakia are beginning to be created.

The National Assembly, the first act of which had been the deposition of the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty and the proclamation of the Czechoslovak Republic, gave the new Republic its definitive Constitution, which was finally passed on February 29, 1920. This Constitution, based on the principle that the sole source of power in the state is the people, bestowed all legislative power upon a National Assembly consisting of a Chamber of Deputies of 300 members and a Senate of 150 members. Deputies and senators are elected on the principle of proportional representation, the franchise is universal and equal, and the ballot secret and direct. Voting takes place by means of "bound" lists of candidates. The right to vote at elections for the Chamber of Deputies is enjoyed by all citizens, male and female, who have attained the age of 21 years. For elections to the Senate this age limit is 26. The National Assembly—the Chamber of Deputies and Senate in joint session—elects the President of the Republic, whose powers are considerable, for a term of seven years. The President has in particular the right of nominating and dismissing the government.

Professor T. G. Masaryk, who in the spring of 1934 was elected, as the only candidate, for a fourth term of office by a great majority of Parliament, has been President from the outset. Nor has the government changed too often. The first Cabinet, that of Dr Krámář, was succeeded in 1919 by a Social Democratic Government under M. Tusar, which in turn gave way a year later to a Cabinet of officials. As early as the autumn of 1921, however, another Parliamentary Government was in office with Dr Beneš, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as Premier. In the autumn of 1922, a government came into power based on a coalition of five Czechoslovak parties, the Premier being the well-known Agrarian politician, M. Antonín Švehla. Even after the parliamentary elections of 1925 M. Švehla retained the office of Prime Minister and his Cabinet underwent but little change. In the spring of 1926 he resigned because of ill health, and his Cabinet was replaced by one composed of officials, but in October of the same year he formed a new government based on a coalition of bourgeois parties including Germans as well as Czechs. A grave illness compelled Švehla after a time to retire once again, and finally in 1933 this proved fatal. The premiership, however, has since then been unbrokenly in the hands of a member of his party. The general composition of the parliamentary majority to which the Czechoslovak Government looks for support has changed little since 1926. Its nucleus is the leading and numerically strongest parties—the Agrarian (Republican), the Czechoslovak Social-Democratic, the Czechoslovak Socialist (Beneš), the Popular (Catholic) parties and the German Agrarian party, who were first accompanied by the German

Christian Socialists, and later by the German Social Democrats.

The old Diets of the Bohemian Lands and their considerable powers of autonomy as they used to exist—Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia, of course, never had such bodies—were not restored by the Constitution. By an enactment passed in 1920 the Lands were entirely abolished and their place taken by “župy” (counties) formed without regard to the boundaries of the old Lands, and equipped with only limited powers of self-government. This county administrative system was, however, put into effect only in Slovakia in 1923, and in 1928 was in its turn abolished to be replaced, under a law passed in 1927, by the institution of Lands or Provinces: Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. The representative bodies of these Lands, composed of a majority of elected members and of a minority nominated by the government, are but a mere shadow of the ancient Diets of the Lands. The proceedings of these bodies are directed by “Land Presidents” who have extensive powers. They are state officials who are at the head of the offices of the Lands, and who deal with some matters in conjunction with the Committees of the Lands elected by the representative bodies of those Lands from among their own members.

Next to the Constitution the most important legislative work of the National Assembly was the far-reaching measure of Land Reform passed in 1919. The impulse to this reform came from the highly unfavorable distribution of the ownership of land throughout the entire territory of Czechoslovakia, especially in Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. On the one hand,

there were numerous tiny holdings and masses of country people hungering for land, while, on the other hand, there existed vast entailed estates in the hands of some few families, most of them alien in race and political sentiment to the people among whom they lived. This state of affairs, largely brought about by the unhappy historical development in these Lands and injurious from an economic, social and national standpoint, contained the germs of a serious menace to social peace, and certainly cried out for the radical alterations that were passed by the National Assembly in 1919 and put into effect with unexpected celerity. This land reform measure abolished the one-time entailed estates, and while leaving an adequate number of smallish landed estates, transferred a great extent of the cultivated soil of the country to small farmers, while immense areas of forest have come into the possession of the state and of various public bodies.

In the sphere of social legislation the outstanding accomplishment of the Czechoslovak Government has been the passing of the Sickness Invalidity and Old-Age Pensions Acts of 1924 and 1925.

Right at the outset of its career Czechoslovakia was called upon to deal with two urgent matters—religion and nationality. The religious problem assumed a particularly sharp form as the result of a movement which, following the attainment of political independence, affected the Czechs in Bohemia and Moravia. Memories of the Hussite past, the conviction that Habsburg Vienna in its hostility to the Czech nation had had an ally in papal Rome, and the religious indifference of the masses who had been brought up in liberalist and social doctrines, gave nourishment to this movement.

Its fruits were a mass secession from the Catholic Church which in this manner lost about one-fifth of all its Czech adherents in the Republic. Most of the seceders—about 800,000 in number—joined the newly founded independent Czechoslovak Church, about 150,000 passed over to Protestantism, while the remaining 600,000 remained unattached to any religious body. All this did not, of course, pass off without friction and skirmishes with those who remained faithful to the Catholic Church. These events, coupled with the various measures taken by the government limiting the former powerful influence of the Church of Rome in the sphere of education and in public affairs generally, proved a serious obstacle to friendly relations between the Czechoslovak Republic and the Holy See. Normal diplomatic relations were nevertheless initiated as early as 1920 by the institution of a Czechoslovak Legation at the Vatican. From the friction which arose between the Czechoslovak Government and the Pope there developed in time a tension that culminated, following the dispute in July, 1925, touching the commemoration of the anniversary of the death of Huss as a state holiday, in an almost complete breach of diplomatic relations. The dispute concerning Huss Day was not settled until the end of 1927, when the Vatican abandoned opposition to it, and a fundamental agreement arrived at touching the most important questions of church policy, *modus vivendi*, so that by the beginning of 1928 diplomatic relations between Czechoslovakia and the Vatican were renewed.

The *modus vivendi* laid down rules for the nomination of Czechoslovak bishops in the spirit of the ecclesiastical law: the bishops are nominated by the Holy See,

but the government has a right of veto for serious political reasons, and it settled the manner and the principles of a new demarcation of the boundaries of the Czechoslovak dioceses—a step made necessary by the changed political conditions. Under the terms of the *modus vivendi* the boundaries of all the Czechoslovak dioceses are to coincide in such manner with the state frontiers that no part of Czechoslovak territory is to pertain to a foreign diocese, while, on the other hand, no portion of a Czechoslovak diocese is to include any territory belonging to a foreign state. This provision affects in particular Slovakia, which in this way will be wholly freed from the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of bishops whose sees are in Hungary. A special article of the *modus vivendi* provides that orders and congregations whose homes are in Czechoslovakia shall not be subject to superiors beyond the frontiers. While this principle was carried out on the whole without difficulty, the new demarcation of dioceses and the readjustment of their endowments, touching which the *modus vivendi* envisaged an agreement between the Czechoslovak Government and the Vatican, entailed long and troublesome negotiations. It was necessary to draw up a detailed plan of the new demarcation of ecclesiastical dioceses in Slovakia that would simultaneously meet the needs of the church and the interests of the state. It was necessary to deal with the claim made by several Hungarian ecclesiastical bodies to portions of church property in Slovakia, to arrive at an agreement in principle upon the execution of the land reform scheme on the estates of the newly demarcated dioceses, to draft a scheme of distribution of the areas which remained over after the

carrying out of the land reform among the individual dioceses. Similar work had to be undertaken in respect of the dioceses of Breslau, Germany, a considerable portion of the jurisdiction and almost the entire domains of which extended deep into the territories of Czechoslovakia. All these labors have now been accomplished, and as the demarcation and endowment scheme evolved by the Czechoslovak Government has been drawn up not only with great conscientiousness and a sense for realities but also with a scrupulous regard for both the interests of the state and the interests of the church there is every hope that complete agreement with the Vatican will be achieved for its execution without serious difficulty or lengthy negotiations. The Czechoslovak Government is in process of negotiation with the Vatican touching the details of the new boundaries of the dioceses, and a new adjustment of their endowments, and these negotiations are so far advanced that this great and politically significant work is likely to be brought to a close in the near future.

Important changes occurred after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in the ecclesiastical position of the Protestants within its territory. The Protestants of Czech nationality broke away as early as December, 1918, from the uniform church which, during the Habsburg régime, had comprised the Protestants of the Augsburg and Helvetian confessions irrespective of race. Proclaiming their adherence to the traditions of the Hussites and the Unity of Brethren of old, to the Bohemian Confession of 1575 and the Letter of Majesty of 1609, they adopted the title of the "Protestant Church of Czech Brethren," and their membership is now about 300,000. A German Protes-

tant Church was established in like manner in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia in October, 1919. In Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia where, under the Hungarian régime, the Protestants of both the Augsburg and Helvetian confessions had had their own independent church organizations—the Protestants of the Helvetian Confession were mostly Magyars, those of the Augsburg Confession mostly of German and Slovak nationality—there was established an independent Protestant Church of the Augsburg Confession early in 1919, whereas it was only recently that the Church of the Helvetian Confession in Slovakia became independent of the church authorities in Budapest.

The political upheaval of the year 1918 also aroused no small movement among the adherents of the Orthodox Church in Czechoslovakia. Though there were but a few adherents of Orthodoxy in the "historical Lands" of the Republic, that is in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, there was at once created at Prague in 1919 an Orthodox Community which was subordinated to the Patriarchate of Constantinople and which endeavored to win over the adherents of Orthodoxy in Carpathian Ruthenia—about 70,000 in number—to acceptance of the jurisdiction of Constantinople. In January, 1924, however, close collaboration between the Orthodox Church in Czechoslovakia and the Orthodox Church of Serbia was agreed upon at the Congress of the Little Entente, and the Czechoslovak adherents of Orthodoxy subsequently placed themselves wholly under Serbian jurisdiction. To it also submitted a group of former adherents of the Czechoslovak Church, who, following the lead of one of their bishops, joined the Orthodox Church. Altogether the Orthodox

Church has a membership of 145,000 in Czechoslovakia, 112,000 of them being accounted for by Carpathian Ruthenia.

The importance of the nationality question for Czechoslovakia bases not merely on the numerical but also—and this especially—on the political and economic strength of the two largest minority groups: the Germans in the old Lands of the Bohemian Crown, and the Magyars in Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. In particular, the 3,231,718 German subjects of the Czechoslovak State, thoroughly conscious of their national interests, politically mature and unusually strong in the economic sphere, hold there a position which differs considerably from the usual position of national minorities in other countries. Their negative attitude toward the Czechoslovak State in its early stages when, as we have seen, they strove for incorporation in the new Austria, was calculated to provoke serious doubts as to the future of Czechoslovakia. But the force of actual circumstances resulting from natural and historical development, coupled with the political acumen of those who directed the affairs of the Czechoslovak State as well as of the leading German politicians in Czechoslovakia, soon produced a favorable change. Abandoning their former negative policy, the Germans in Czechoslovakia gradually adopted one of active participation in the administration of the state, and passed on to friendly coöperation with the Czechoslovaks. The fact that since autumn, 1926, the Germans have been represented by two members of their race in the Czechoslovak Cabinet—and that, too, despite changes in the composition of the government and parliamentary majority on which

the Cabinet has depended—is a proof that the relation of the Germans of Czechoslovakia to their state and to the Czechoslovaks is in process of happy development. This development has been effectively strengthened by the policy of the Hitler régime in Germany which has taught the Germans in Czechoslovakia to place full value upon the benefits of the genuinely democratic system of government obtaining in the Republic. Among the Magyars, who, of course, do not find it easy to forget the fact that they were but recently lords of Slovakia an understanding for the advantages of the democratic and progressive system of government introduced by Czechoslovakia is slowly growing, and with it esteem for the Czechoslovak State and the nation that established and is ruling it. Thus among the Magyars, too, a process of conversion from an absolute negation of the new order to active participation in the public affairs of the state is taking place—of a state which can be, and is desirous of being, a friendly home for them.

From neither nationality problems nor religious questions has the Czechoslovak Republic any serious menace to fear. Its social and economic conditions rest on solid foundations, and as it has succeeded in convincing the responsible factors in international politics both of its internal stability and of its significance for the peaceful development of Central Europe—indeed, of Europe generally—the Czechoslovak Republic may, even at a period of crisis, economic, social and political, look forward with tranquillity and hope toward a future that, with God's blessing, will be both happy and glorious.

CHAPTER XV

Czechoslovakia's Place in Europe

TO ASSURE, in the face of all external menace, the existence of the young Republic in the form guaranteed it by the Peace Treaties was the main task of Czechoslovakia's foreign policy, which from the outset has been conducted by Dr. Eduard Beneš as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Among such dangers there was in particular the overt endeavors of the Hungarians to recover the territories which had been severed from pre-war Hungary and incorporated in Czechoslovakia. Against this menace which had been intensified by the ex-Emperor Charles' attempts to recover the Hungarian throne, in March and October, 1921, Czechoslovakia sought support from countries which had interests analogous to her own. Thus there came about the conclusion of a defensive alliance first between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, in August, 1920, and then between Czechoslovakia and Rumania, in April, 1921, and thus the inception of a permanent alliance among these three states which has come to be known as the Little Entente.

The treaties among the states of the Little Entente, concluded originally for a term of two years, have been several times renewed—on the last occasion in February, 1933, and for an indefinite period. Simultaneously there was signed a new Organization Pact of the Little Entente. This Pact, which set up a Stand-

ing Council of the Little Entente composed of the Foreign Ministers of the three countries, a permanent secretariat and an Economic Council, was merely the organic consummation of the actual development of the Little Entente which had preceded it. Henceforth the three Little Entente states act as a single body. This is guaranteed by a special article of the Pact which provides that every political agreement made by each of the three states of the Little Entente, every unilateral act capable of altering the political situation of one of these states as against third parties as well as every commercial treaty of agreement capable of having serious political effects now requires the unanimous consent of the Standing Council. The new organization of the Little Entente has made no change either in the fundamental idea on which that alliance is based or in its mission. The consciousness of a need to be insured against a surprise on the part of a Hungary dissatisfied with the new order of things was the main cause of the formation of the Little Entente, and defense against all efforts to bring about such a change in the existing order in Europe as would impinge upon the unity, integrity and possibly even the very existence of the three states continues to be its most urgent task.

From its inception however, the Little Entente saw its task not only in assuring the safety and tranquillity of the three states composing it, but contributed also to the pacification and consolidation of European conditions generally. With increasing efforts to check the unfavorable consequences of the break up of great economic areas in Central Europe, the Little Entente systematically endeavors to bring about closer eco-

conomic coöperation among the three component states *inter se*, and between them and their neighbors. The Little Entente has also from the very outset endeavored, by means of a suitable adjustment of its relations to the blocks of great European powers, to prepare the ground for collaboration among all the countries of Europe.

In addition to the alliance with the states of the Little Entente, friendship and trusty coöperation with France had been one of the fundamental elements of Czechoslovakia's foreign policy. The solid foundation of this coöperation is to be seen not only in the gratitude of the Czechoslovak nation for all the help received from France in its fight for independence and subsequent struggles, and in the sincere sympathies shown to it by the French—sympathies strengthened by the fidelity of both to the great ideals of liberty and humanity—but also, and this above all, in the joint conviction of the two peoples that it is in the interests not merely of both countries but also of all Europe that the new order of things established after the war shall be substantially preserved, and that it shall not be overthrown by attempts at a return to the old pre-war conditions which are incompatible with the conception of the equality of right of all nations to a free existence. A visible expression of this relationship to France is the treaty of alliance and friendship, concluded in January, 1924, in which both countries undertake to agree upon questions of importance for their security and for the maintenance of the order of things established by the peace treaties which bear their signatures, and upon suitable measures to be taken for the protection of their common interests in case of

menace, and particularly on measures to be taken to prevent the incorporation of Austria in Germany, the restoration of the Habsburgs or a restoration of the Hohenzollerns. A substantial strengthening of the relations of Czechoslovakia to France as expressed in this treaty of 1924 was the outcome of the well-known Locarno agreements of October, 1925, one of the main components of which was the Rhine Pact concluded between Germany and France and other European powers. Within the framework of these Locarno agreements there was concluded between Czechoslovakia and France a so-called guaranty treaty in which the two states undertook to render each other assistance should Germany fail in the obligations she had simultaneously taken upon herself in the treaties of arbitration she had signed, and if in place of arbitration she should design to settle disputes with them by force.

In entering upon her new existence, Czechoslovakia also enjoyed the warm friendship of the other Latin power that had stood with France closest beside the cradle of the young Republic—Italy. The gratitude of the Czechoslovak nation for all that Italy had done in helping to secure an independent Czechoslovakia, for the valuable and friendly services rendered not only to the Czechoslovak legions during the war but also to the young Republic in its struggle with the difficulties that faced its first steps, has never ceased to draw Czechoslovakia close to Italy, despite the fact that in the sphere of foreign politics their paths in the course of time have diverged. During the early period after the war such divergence never at any time seemed possible. The direction then followed by the foreign

policy of Italy was clearly and expressively reflected in the anti-Habsburg convention concluded at Rapallo in November, 1920, between Italy and Yugoslavia, whose treaty of alliance with Czechoslovakia was at the same time noted with thankfulness by Italy. Immediately after that a complete identity of views and aims in the foreign policies of Czechoslovakia and Italy was expressly registered by an exchange of notes between the respective Foreign Ministers. Nor did the revolution of the year 1922, which placed the conduct of Italian policy both internal and external in the hands of Benito Mussolini, mar the relations between the two countries. On the contrary, in the spring of 1923, after the settlement of the disputes between Yugoslavia and Italy by the Fiume agreement, a pact of warm friendship and collaboration was negotiated and signed between Italy and Czechoslovakia. In this pact and in the two analogous pacts which Italy concluded with Yugoslavia and with Rumania—the former prior to the pact with Czechoslovakia, and the latter in 1926—it could be seen that the Italy of Mussolini was also at one with Czechoslovakia and with the whole Little Entente in their endeavor to preserve the new post-war order in Central Europe. In subsequent years, however, Italian foreign policy developed in serious disharmony with the fundamental standpoint of the foreign policy of Czechoslovakia. Various disagreements between Italy and France, on the one hand and Italy and Yugoslavia, on the other, contributed to a cooling of mutual relations, as did also the ostentatious demonstrations of Italian sympathies with the Hungarian revisionist aims, directed as these were against Czechoslovakia. Thus it came about that the treaty

of friendship between Czechoslovakia and Italy was not renewed on the expiration of the term for which it had been concluded.

The bold attempt at a customs union between Austria and Germany made in 1931 by Messrs. Schober and Curtius threw Czechoslovakia and Italy, it is true, into one camp for the moment, but it did not succeed in bringing about any permanent improvement in the relations between them. These relations, on the contrary, were further aggravated by the sharply critical attitude adopted by Italy to the new Organization Pact of the Little Entente of December, 1932, and somewhat later by the Italian proposal for the establishment of a directorate of four great powers of Europe with obviously revisionist aims. Of late, however, relations between Czechoslovakia and Italy have improved as a result of Italy's better relations with France and Jugoslavia.

Great Britain, too, has maintained her attitude of effective friendship for Czechoslovakia throughout the post-war years. Conjointly with France and Italy she assisted in 1921 in defeating the attempt at a Habsburg revolution in Hungary, and by friendly appreciation of the interests and the needs of Czechoslovakia she has, while assisting in the solution of all the outstanding European problems, rendered Czechoslovakia more than once most valuable diplomatic help. The other great Anglo-Saxon power, the United States of America, which took such a powerful part in the great struggle for the political liberation of the Czechoslovak nation, and through its noble president, Woodrow Wilson, had such an outstanding share in the creation of the new Europe, and especially in the adjustment of

conditions in Central Europe, subsequently held aloof from direct participation in the international affairs of Europe. None the less, on various occasions the United States has shown that it continues to regard Czechoslovakia as a state united with America not only in remembrance of comradeship in the Great War but also in fidelity to the ideals of liberty and democracy. There is, moreover, a tie between the two countries in the notable activities and achievements in the public life of the United States of several Czechoslovaks imbued with sincere devotion to their new country. Of the other great powers among the war-time Allies, Japan has on the occasion of numerous international negotiations given more than one proof of her sympathies for Czechoslovakia, and even the decided attitude adopted by the Republic against the Japanese action in the Manchukuo dispute did not seriously affect the relations between the two countries.

While the Czechoslovak nation regarded old Russia with genuine sympathy as the greatest of the Slav states from which they expected the most effectual assistance in their struggle for independence, the relations of the Czechoslovak Republic to the new Russia which turned its back ostentatiously on the old traditions and ideals of the Russian nation and state, even casting off the designation of the old empire, were for a long time very cold. Czechoslovakia declined, it is true, to be drawn into attempts at armed intervention against the new régime of Soviet Russia, and avoided all intermeddling in the internal affairs of the country, but refused recognition to the new order there and maintained no normal diplomatic contact. The agreement which Czechoslovakia made with the USSR at

the Genoa Conference in 1922 in no way settled the question of *de jure* recognition but adjusted merely the most urgent matters of importance for mutual commercial relations. It was, in particular, agreed to establish a Czechoslovak Trade Mission in Moscow and a Soviet Mission at Prague and their legal position was fixed, it also settled the question of the rights and privileges of the subjects of the one country in the other, and laid down rules for mutual trade relations. Although the activities of the two trade missions developed on the whole in undisturbed fashion, and the mutual relations between Czechoslovakia and the USSR continued to be wholly correct, those relations did not become normal until the spring of 1934 when Czechoslovakia formally recognized Soviet Russia with the express concurrence of her two allies in the Little Entente, one of whom—Rumania—also put her relations with Russia on a normal footing at the same time, while Yugoslavia reserved to herself the right of doing so at a later date. In June 1934, Soviet Russia established a regular Legation at Prague while at the same time a Czechoslovak Legation was established in Moscow.

Not merely close ties of language and blood and numerous common interests, but also the like ideological foundations of the restored independence of the Polish and Czechoslovak states, made for close relations from the very outset between Czechoslovakia and Poland. Having been, like Czechoslovakia, raised to new life by the Great War, Poland is one of the foundation pillars of the new political order in Central Europe. The fortunes of the two states are so closely and indissolubly bound together that without a free Poland it

is difficult to imagine a free Czechoslovakia, or to envisage an independent Poland without an independent Czechoslovakia. Various frontier and other disputes, however, issuing from the direct contiguity of the two states marred their relations at first. It was only after the final settlement of these disputes in the autumn of 1924 that negotiations for a detailed adjustment of their relations could be entered upon between the two. In the spring of 1925 these negotiations were concluded on the occasion of the visit of the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs to Warsaw, by the signature of several agreements including treaties of commerce and arbitration. In the treaty of arbitration the two countries proclaimed their desire to expand their friendly contacts, and, in the spirit of the League of Nations, undertook to submit all disagreements that could not be settled by diplomatic means to the decision of a court of conciliation or arbitration.

Subsequently the relations between Poland and Czechoslovakia developed along increasingly friendly lines. The Italian attempt to set up a directorate of four European powers in the spring of 1933, which met with the same determined opposition in Poland as it did in Czechoslovakia and the other Little Entente States, produced at first a substantial rapprochement between Poland and Czechoslovakia and the rest of the Little Entente, but afterwards became a cause of serious disharmony. Whereas the Little Entente, after such alterations in the original draft of the Pact of Four as deprived it of menace to their vital interests, and after securing from France such guaranties as enabled them to regard their interests as well-guarded, decided to cease their opposition to the Pact as thus

modified, Poland continued a most determined and bitter opposition to it, regarding the divergent attitude of the Little Entente in this matter with disfavor, she gave expression to her dissatisfaction by a cold reserve. The alienation between Poland and Czechoslovakia further increased when, after the negotiation and the proclamation of the pact of friendship between Poland and Germany at the beginning of 1934, the government press in Poland began to write in uncomplimentary terms about Czechoslovakia. It may confidently be anticipated, however, that this alienation will soon give way to a genuine and friendly collaboration that would correspond to the sentiments of sincere friendship which are entertained by the overwhelming majority of the two kindred nations.

A serious and difficult task in the sphere of Czechoslovakia's foreign policy from the outset was the adjustment of her relations to the two small states which remained as parts of the dismembered Habsburg Monarchy in the closest contiguity to Czechoslovakia as the actual heirs of that monarchy's historical traditions, guilt and defeat—the new Austria and the new Hungary. The task was relatively smoothly and rapidly accomplished as regards Austria. On both sides the initial bitterness soon gave way to sober reason which in its turn gave rise to a natural desire to adjust relations in a manner corresponding to the manifold mutual interests of the two states born of several centuries of common political and economic existence. As early as January, 1920, Dr. Renner, the Austrian Chancellor, visited Prague, and a series of agreements settled the more important legal, financial and economic questions issuing from the break up of the close

ties which had hitherto bound the two states. In the spring of 1921 the first interim commercial treaty was concluded, and at the close of that year a visit paid by the Austrian President Hainisch and Chancellor Schober to Lány and Prague resulted in the signing of a political treaty between Czechoslovakia and Austria.

In this treaty, known as the Treaty of Lány, the two countries mutually guarantee each other's territories, and undertake not to suffer within their own frontiers any tendencies directed toward the overthrow of the status created by the treaties of peace. In case of war both states guarantee their neutrality, and express their readiness to settle all mutual disputes by arbitration. The good relations between Austria and Czechoslovakia were confirmed when Czechoslovakia, on the financial collapse of Austria, raised a loan of 500 million crowns for that country and participated generously in the action taken by the League of Nations for Austria's financial rehabilitation. From then on, the economic and political relations between the two states developed without incident, and the friendly character of the relations manifested itself in frequent mutual visits and meetings between the leading Austrian statesmen and the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs. Only the idea of incorporating Austria in Germany—an idea which had many supporters among the Austrian population and which was not alien even to several of the official Austrian leaders, but which for obvious reasons was always most decidedly opposed by those responsible for Czechoslovakia's foreign policy—marred a state of complete political harmony. When, in 1931, the Austrian Chancellor Schober conjointly with Dr. Curtius, the German Foreign Minister,

surprised the world by an agreement for an Austro-German customs union which was obviously designed to prepare the way for the political union of the two countries (Anschluss), a serious state of disaffection ensued for a time between Czechoslovakia and Austria. By the frustration of the Schober-Curtius design, however, the cause of this estrangement was removed, and Czechoslovakia's relations to Austria soon assumed their former friendly character. The decided deflection of Austria from the Anschluss idea caused by the Hitler revolution in Germany has contributed substantially to a closer approach between the foreign policy of Austria and that of Czechoslovakia. The serious internal struggles which have marked the recent history of Austria, and the uncertainty in the internal conditions there—in which of course, Czechoslovakia can in no way meddle—have by no means facilitated the maintenance of tranquil economic and cultural contacts between these two neighbors whose past brings them so close together.

Czechoslovakia's relations with Hungary were much more unfavorable from the outset and still continue to be so. Hungary, in contradistinction to Austria, has never ceased to resist the new political order in Central Europe. The invasion of Slovakia by Magyar hands under the Communist régime of Bela Kun, and, after his fall, the renewed attempt to restore the Habsburg dynasty in Hungary in the person of the Archduke Joseph, made peaceful relations between them impossible prior to the signing of the Trianon Peace Treaty. Even since then the Hungarians have never ceased to proclaim that they accepted that Treaty under duress, that they do not regard its provisions as definitive

and that they have not surrendered their claims to the lost territories, in particular to Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. Subsequently two unsuccessful attempts at a return of the ex-Emperor Charles to Hungary were made. In spite of this, endeavors were initiated from 1921 on for a resumption of normal neighborly relations and the settlement of at least the most urgent matters in the sphere of mutual contacts. These endeavors were somewhat facilitated when in the autumn of 1922 Hungary became a member of the League of Nations, the votes of Czechoslovakia and the entire Little Entente being given in its favor. A more apparent change in the official attitude of Hungary to Czechoslovakia and the Little Entente occurred a little later when the Hungarian Government was compelled by the serious economic, and especially financial, situation of the country to appeal to the West of Europe for a foreign loan and for the suspension of the Reparation Commission's right of attachment over the property and revenue of the Hungarian State. Hungary now saw that she could not attain this end unless she displayed good will and a readiness to live on peaceful terms with her neighbors and to abandon irredentist machinations. Thus while the rehabilitation of Hungary's finances was being arranged in the League of Nations in 1923, direct negotiations between Prague and Budapest proceeded for an adjustment of commercial relations and for a settlement of all disputed financial and legal questions. The negotiations proceeded but slowly and the results were very piecemeal. It was not until the summer of 1926 that a provisional agreement on economic contacts was reached, for which a commercial treaty was substituted the following summer.

This favorable development between Czechoslovakia and Hungary was continually disturbed by all manner of demonstrations of Hungary's political hostility to Czechoslovakia, and of her irrepressible efforts to regain the areas of old Hungary that had been incorporated in Czechoslovakia. There was in particular the notorious case of the counterfeiting of francs in December, 1924, followed by the noisy revisionist campaign under Lord Rothermere, which commenced in 1927 and aroused in Hungary the most romantic political plans based on a belief in the renewal of a Greater Hungary. When all the hopes placed in the Rothermere campaign fell to the ground, the Hungarians found a new impulse for their revisionist plans in the policy of Italy and in that country's publicly manifested sympathies for Hungary and her efforts at revision.

Czechoslovakia realizes how painful for the Hungarians is the loss of territories which were for centuries part of the state that they so deeply love and honor, and which are now incorporated in the Czechoslovak Republic. While she feels with them from the human point of view and understands this affliction of a nation proud of its past—a past often, however, embellished in uncritical fashion—a nation that cannot forget the outstanding position which it acquired in the international life of Europe, especially in the last few decades preceding the Great War, Czechoslovakia cannot but remind them and the rest of the world that the Hungarians for the most part brought their fall upon themselves by their unwise nationality policy. She cannot but continue to hold the conviction that the severing of Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia

from old Hungary and their incorporation in Czechoslovakia was reasonable and just, and that it was not, and is not, possible to sacrifice the natural rights of the Slav inhabitants of those lands to pursue an independent existence of their own to the historical rights of the Hungarians to those lands, rights which they so obstinately and ruthlessly abused. Herein lies the substance of the profound gulf between Czechoslovakia and Hungary, which it has not been as yet possible to bridge over, and which will remain unbridged for a long time to come. None the less, Czechoslovakia would like to live in peace with the new Hungary, to have good relations, especially commercial and economic contacts, with her—a state of affairs which would be to her interest just as it would be to the interest of Czechoslovakia.

Remarkably enough, Czechoslovakia's relations with the state which, during the war, was the most powerful pillar of the front opposed to Czechoslovak aspirations, that is, Germany, have developed smoothly. It was to be feared that these relations, complicated by the existence of a large German minority in Czechoslovakia, would be, at any rate during the early period following the war, in a state of great tension. These fears proved unfounded. On the contrary, the mutual contacts of the two countries were brought into normal line with remarkable rapidity and ease. A contributory factor, in addition to the conciliatory character of the early post-war governments in Germany, was the fact that from the outset there had been no serious disputes, territorial or otherwise, between the countries. During the negotiations for the new adjustment of European conditions, Czechoslovakia had claimed nothing from

Germany beyond the small area of Hlučínsko (Glatz), which had but little significance for Germany, and Germany had claimed nothing from Czechoslovakia. Nor did the German minority in Czechoslovakia at that time demand incorporation so defeated Germany, but asked to be included in the new Austria. Thus it came about that the relations between the small Czechoslovak Republic and her powerful German neighbor were able to develop without incident. After the settlement of the frontier questions connected with the taking over of the district of Hlučínsko in 1920 an economic agreement was concluded in the same year, while in subsequent years were settled the questions of citizenship, of legal remedies in connection with the surrender of criminals—extradition, and a number of financial as well as social questions. In order to reach agreement in the matter of Czechoslovakia's claim to a zone of her own in the free port of Hamburg, as conceded to Czechoslovakia by the Peace Treaty, difficult negotiations extending over several years proved necessary, but in the end this matter was settled to the complete satisfaction of both parties on terms which have so far proved successful in practice.

The political relations of Czechoslovakia to Germany were for a long time under a cloud as a consequence of the strained relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia's main allies, France in particular. The great and disturbing struggle on the part of Germany against reparations and other commitments issuing from the Peace Treaties indirectly, and to some extent also directly, affected Czechoslovakia. The tension which resulted in this connection between Germany and France was naturally reflected in the relations between

Czechoslovakia and Germany. The conclusion of the Rhine Pact at Locarno in October, 1925, which substantially relaxed the tension till then existing between Germany and France, had also a favorable reaction upon the relations of Czechoslovakia and Germany. Simultaneously with that Pact, however, there was concluded at Locarno between Germany and Czechoslovakia a treaty of arbitration analogous to that concluded with France, Belgium and Poland, and this treaty of arbitration entered into effect within the framework of the Locarno agreements at the same moment as the treaty of guaranty made between France and Czechoslovakia. At Locarno, Czechoslovakia was among those who demanded that a condition of the pact be the entry of Germany to the League of Nations. When as a matter of fact Germany was accepted as a member of the League a year after Locarno and at the same time was allotted a permanent seat in the League Council, it seemed that a solid foundation had been laid for a quiet development of good relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia too. Not even the new and agitating negotiations for a readjustment of German war reparations, which indirectly concerned Czechoslovakia since they prompted a final adjustment of the so-called Eastern reparations as well as of Czechoslovakia's "liberation" payment, disturbed these good relations. It was not until the unsuccessful attempt made by Messrs. Schober and Curtius to bring about a customs union between Austria and Germany—an attempt resolutely opposed by Czechoslovakia—that a temporary tension arose. This tension was aggravated by the fact that Czechoslovakia at that time decidedly rejected the German proposal that

Czechoslovakia, too, should join in the proposed customs union. Even this strain for the most part disappeared, and Czechoslovakia's conciliatory attitude during the discussion of international questions that concerned Germany, particularly the question of disarmament, encouraged a return to the former state of normal relations.

The gradual radicalization of Germany's policy in international affairs, which reached its culmination point after the Hitler revolution in the spring of 1933, cast more than one shadow over the mutual relations of the two countries. Numerous excesses and blunders on the part of the new system of government in its early stages, which frequently affected Czechoslovak subjects and interests, seriously threatened to disturb these relations, and the profound gulf which opened up between Czechoslovakia and Germany when the latter country ostentatiously opposed political, intellectual and moral ideals genuinely cherished in Czechoslovakia, increased the menace of serious conflicts. But suddenly matters again quieted down. The Germany of Hitler, having passed through the first stage of revolutionary fever, again directs its efforts toward the maintenance of correct relations with the neighboring countries, and Czechoslovakia, while making no secret of its decided disagreement with the political methods and principles of present-day Germany, abstains from every suspicion of intermeddling in the internal affairs of that country, gratefully recognizing that Germany on her side manifests a determination to be guided by the same principle in her relations to Czechoslovakia. In this way Czechoslovakia is given an opportunity of maintaining normal contacts with Germany.

The entire foreign policy of Czechoslovakia has been, and still is, inspired with firm faith in the League of Nations and in the ideals and methods which that body proclaims. From this confidence, which has not in any way prevented Czechoslovakia from taking steps to insure the security of the state by a system of treaties of alliance, issues quite naturally that systematic and outstanding participation by Czechoslovakia in all the activities of the League, in all the international conferences and negotiations conducted on its initiative or at least in connection with it. On the formal side, the relations of Czechoslovakia and the League of Nations are determined by the fact that the provisions relating to the League are part and parcel of the Peace Treaties and that Czechoslovakia is one of the thirty-two foundation members of the League. From its inception Czechoslovakia has taken part in the work of the League of Nations, at the annual General Assembly and in the various commissions, committees, organizations and institutions attached to it, and her collaboration with the League was substantially extended in 1923 when she was first elected to a seat on the Council. She remained a member of the Council for an unbroken period of five years, and after some years' interval, in which her place was taken by one or other of the two other states of the Little Entente, she is again a member today. Of Czechoslovakia's activities in the League of Nations it will perhaps suffice to recall the important part played by the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister and his collaborators in the negotiations for the well-known Geneva Protocol of 1924; in the preparations for the Disarmament Conference as well as in the actual work of this Con-

ference, in the settlement of a number of serious political conflicts, in the steps taken for the financial rehabilitation of Austria Hungary and Bulgaria, in the deliberations of the European Research Commission, and various other expert commissions

Since Czechoslovakia sees the significance and the mission of the League of Nations first and foremost in the fact that the League provides a framework for the settlement of international questions by the joint efforts of big and little states all enjoying equal rights in that institution and not by the unilateral dictate of great powers the Republic has in the foreign policy resolutely opposed all attempts to throw the decision on outstanding questions of international policy once more upon the great powers of the Continent She has not done so from any desire to deny the special and entirely natural weight of the voices of the great powers in international and particularly European affairs, but she was convinced and still is convinced, that the great powers should not for the future have it in their control to carry out their political plans and economic aims over the heads of the small states, making these states the mere instruments of their policy In harmony with this point of view Czechoslovakia, jointly with the other two Little Entente states and with Poland, offered determined opposition to the Italian proposal for the establishment of a directorate of great powers composed of representatives of Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy That opposition contributed to the substantial change made in the original Italian proposal and to the substitution of a Pact of Four which expressly laid it down that the four powers desired to deliberate and to decide only

upon matters of their own concern. Moreover, Czechoslovakia and the other states of the Little Entente received from France a solemn assurance that she would never permit a breach of the main principle observed in the League of Nations: a principle of pre-eminent importance for Czechoslovakia—the principle that the vote of all the members of the League, including even those unaffected by revision, shall be requisite for any resolution whatsoever touching territorial revision. In these circumstances Czechoslovakia was able to reconcile herself to the Pact of Four, though she had no particular enthusiasm for it. For the rest, the Pact has so far not been formally promulgated, and not put into practical effect.

Even the serious crisis in which the League of Nations found itself through the withdrawal of Germany and Japan from its ranks and the failure of the Disarmament Conference has not shaken Czechoslovakia's faith. At a moment of grievous crisis for the League of Nations Czechoslovakia is convinced that fidelity must be observed to those ideals of which the League of Nations Pact is such a splendid expression—fidelity to the idea of peaceful settlement of disputes between nations as a means of avoiding settlement by force, fidelity to the idea of joint effort by all countries and nations of good will for the improvement of the economic, social and cultural status of humanity.

THE DEFINITIVE CONSTITUTION OF THE
CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC

(By Dr. JIŘÍ HOETZEL)

The National Assembly of the Czechoslovak Republic—a body which was the product of the Revolution—determined, by an enactment dated 29th February 1920, on the definitive Constitution of the land. Conditions resulting from the War prevented this Constitution being elaborated with the parliamentary co-operation of non-Czech citizens of the Republic (i.e. Germans and Magyars), particularly as the frontiers of our state had not at all points as yet been finally determined upon. The National Assembly, with due regard to this fact, endeavoured to elaborate a Constitution which should be both just and impartial, so that our state might in all honour defend it against criticism however severe—a criticism taking just account of all attendant circumstances.

The Charter of the Constitution expressly declares the Czechoslovak Republic to be a democratic republic. It is a unified, not a federative state. Only the territory of Carpathian Ruthenia enjoys a special position in regard of public rights, defined in par 3 of the Charter. By these provisions, the Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye (articles 10-13) made on September 10th 1919 between the Allied and Associated Powers of the one part and the Czechoslovak Republic of the other part, has been carried into effect within the state itself. The Czechoslovak Republic, it is true, was under no obligation according to article 1 of the said treaty, to declare the articles 10-13 as fundamental (constitutional) articles. By doing so in par 3 of the Charter the Republic clearly shows that she desires fully to guarantee the auto-

onomic existence of the territory of Russinia. Our Republic has done more than its international duty, not only formally but also *de facto*, in admitting the members of the National Assembly (deputies and senators) elected in Russinia, to full rights of discussion, of voting and participation in *all* acts of the National Assembly, although article 13 of the Treaty of St. Germain lays down: "Toutefois ces députés ne jouiront pas du droit de vote dans la Diète Tchécoslovaque en toutes matières législatives du même ordre que celle attribuées à la Diète ruthène."

The organisation of the territory of Russinia is being carried out and is facilitated by section 8 of par. 3 of the Constitutional Charter. The unity of our State recognized *inter alia* in article 10 of the Treaty of St. Germain, is emphasized in par. 4, according to which, citizenship of the Republic is one and uniform.

At the head of the Charter of the Constitution stands the principle that: "The people is the sole fountain of state authority in the Czechoslovak Republic."

The Charter does not treat this principle as a mere formula but endeavours to give constitutional life to it, limiting its application only in cases where the integrity and security of the state categorically demand restrictive stipulations.

Legislative power is unified—the autonomic diet of Russia of course forms an exception. Our little state could not permit the different provincial diets, previously existing, to continue their functions. Par. 7, therefore, of the Charter declares the legislative, and executive powers of the diets of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia at an end. The legislative body (National Assembly) is composed of two chambers: the House of Deputies and the Senate. Both chambers are elected by direct ballot on the basis of democratic rules of suffrage which recognize the absolute equality of both sexes (par. 8-17 of the Charter). The elections take place on the principles of proportional representation carefully worked out to the minutest details. A second and a third scrutiny

secure as perfect a representation as is possible to the weaker political parties. The Rules of Franchise both for the House of Deputies as for the Senate draw no distinctions in regard of race or religion they are equally just to all. It has been the earnest endeavour of our state to apply, in all its consequences, the principle expressed in Sect. 1 of Article 7 of the Treaty of St. Germain (§ 123 See 1 of the Constitutional Charter). Our State has also conscientiously applied this principle in drawing up the Rules of Franchise.

It is important to note, too, that our Rules of Franchise are totally devoid of all that electoral trickery so characteristic of the Austrian franchise. A proportionately large number of seats has been given to the constituency of Prague, but this is explained by the fact on the one hand this electoral district contains the capital of the Republic with its enormous possibilities of development and that on the other hand, the district was purposely neglected by the Austro-German governments. It is absolutely certain that the large influx of population continually going on will result in a large increase in the number of inhabitants. The Rules of Franchise, calculated to cover a long period of time, had to be adapted to these facts and circumstances. As to the technical aspect of electoral procedure great care has been taken to secure that every elector may record his vote without suffering from any outside constraint whatsoever. Here too all persons are treated exactly alike no regard being paid to difference of race or religion.

Great care has been bestowed upon the organisation of the body legislative. Tough political fights ended in compromise and the Chamber of Deputies emerged as the political factor par excellence. It is this chamber alone that by a vote of non confidence can compel the resignation of the Government (par 75 and 76 of the Charter of the Constitution). The Senate on the other hand exercises rather the functions of amendment and moderation. The limit of age prescribed for eligibility to the Senate (45 years) is a guarantee that this

chamber will be composed of members of experience and judgment. As an offset to this somewhat high passive age-limit, the active franchise is enjoyed by all citizens who have attained the age of 26 years (and not 30 as was proposed in many quarters). The reciprocal relations of the two Chambers in respect of lawmaking—as determined by the Charter of the Constitution after protracted struggles and discussions—do not follow the lines of those of any other country. In principle the two chambers are in so far equal that they both enjoy the right of initiative, and that even Government bills may be first introduced in either house. Only in the case of Budget and Army Bills must the measures first pass through the House of Deputies. On the whole it may confidently be said that more discipline and conservatism have been introduced into the legislative labours of the new National Assembly and certainly more settled economical and political conditions in Europe generally will contribute also thereto.

It is naturally of the greatest importance to our state that all parliamentary work should take an undisturbed and effective course. Much care has therefore been devoted to the elaboration of Rules of Procedure. It is particularly worthy of notice that these Rules concede to racial minorities within the state the maximum of rights compatible with the practical working of the parliamentary machine. A comparison with the conditions existing in the former parliaments of Vienna and Budapest will shew how infinitely better is the lot of the racial minorities in our Republic than was the lot of the Czechs and Slovaks under the old régime at Vienna and Budapest. At the same time, it was necessary that the Rules of Procedure should keep in check, if not render absolutely impossible, all malicious attempts to frustrate the practical labours of Parliament.

The democratic spirit of our Constitution is likewise shewn in par. 54 of the Charter of the Constitution. This paragraph provides for the setting up of a permanent Committee

—two-thirds of the members of which are taken from the House of Deputies and one-third from the Senate—which shall take the place of the National Assembly when the latter is unable to sit. Governmental and executive authority is thus, in principle, devoid of such power as was possessed, for example, by the Government of the former Austrian Empire in virtue of the notorious Article XIV of the law relating to the representation of the Empire. The Charter of the Constitution does not permit the Government of our state to remain for one moment without the control, nor yet without the aid of the legislative body.

The President of the Republic, it is true, has been conceded certain prerogatives in respect of the National Assembly: it is he who convokes, prorogues, terminates and dissolves parliament, but strict limits have been set, in the interests of parliament to these prerogatives (par 28-31 of the Charter of the Constitution). The President is bound to convoke parliament at least twice a year to regular sessions, besides which he may summon it to extraordinary sessions if need be. On the request of a qualified majority of either chamber, both chambers assemble, if necessary automatically, at the summons of their respective presidents, without regard to the wishes of the President of the Republic. The Charter of the Constitution protects in this matter even parliamentary minorities, for they too have the right to demand the convocation of parliament and if the President of the Republic take no steps to this end the parliament meets automatically within a certain period on the summons of its presidents. This provision (par 28 of the Charter of the Constitution) proves how our State protects a minority in a sphere so sensitive as is that of parliament. A minority has the right to compel the summoning of parliament!

The President of the Republic is entitled to return, with his observation thereon, any law passed by the National Assembly (§ 47 of the Charter of the Constitution). In spite of the veto of the President the Assembly may promulgate

the law in its original form with the assent of an absolute majority of both houses (or otherwise under the special conditions set out in § 48 of the Charter of the Constitution).

It is appropriate here to point out that the Charter of the Constitution is placed in its entirety under the special and effective protection of a Constitutional Court. It is intended that the Charter of the Constitution be the foundation stone of the whole life of the state, the fountain of the rights of all citizens. An ordinary law may not conflict with the Constitution without becoming null and void. The judgment of the Constitutional Court declaring a law invalid causes it or its defective part to lose its binding force for the future. This institution likewise serves as a protection of the rights of minorities whether racial or religious.

In this connection may be also noted the provision of § 55 of the Charter, stipulating that Government decrees (bye-laws) may be issued only on the basis of a law and within its terms. The power to issue orders "*praeter legem*," as exercised, for instance, in France does not exist here. It is the duty of the Courts to see that this principle is duly observed (§ 102 of the Charter of the Constitution) and they have power to declare as null and void every decree or bye-law which does not conform to the law.

GOVERNMENTAL AND EXECUTIVE POWER

This power in its highest aspects is shared between the President of the Republic and the Government. The election of the President is indirect, that is, he is chosen by the two chambers of Parliament assembled in united session. The President enjoys such governmental and executive power as is expressly assigned to him by the Charter of the Constitution or by other laws of the Republic; all other Governmental and executive power rests in the hands of the Government. The functions of the President as set out in § 64

of the Charter of the Constitution are very comprehensive and effective and enable the President to exercise a great influence on the direction of the affairs of the State, without at the same time burdening him with details. As the President of the Republic is not responsible at law for his political acts (except as set forth in § 67 of the Charter), governmental and executive power has been in principle placed in the hands of the responsible factors, that is, the Government. The Constitution expressly introduces the principle of collective responsibility of the Government (§§ 75 and 78 of the Charter). A characteristic feature of our Constitution is the effort to secure that all the more important matters of government be settled in a Council of ministers, a cabinet meeting (§§ 80 and 81 of the Charter of the Constitution), the idea being to render it impossible for an individual minister to abuse his position. This effort, as evidenced by the Charter of the Constitution to ensure a collective and corporate discussion and action in the affairs of government goes so far as to deny to ministers the right of appointing civil servants of the VII and VIII classes. These provisions, too, of the Constitutional Charter are a protection to minorities and aim at assuring an undisturbed and responsible conduct of the affairs of government.

Democratisation among us is not confined to legislative authority, one of our great tasks is the democratization of the public administration, and to this work the foundations have been laid by § 86 of the Charter where it is laid down that the civic element shall as far as possible be represented in the subordinate offices of State. The law creating special administrative bodies for the counties (*župy*) and the districts (*okresy*) represents an effort to put this constitutional principle into practice. It is a bold step toward reorganizing public administration in a more democratic direction. The civic element thus participates in all political administration (interior) in the subordinate offices (ministries are an exception). This participation is particularly conspicuous in the

organization of the administrative Courts (*contentieux a priori et a posteriori*), where it is a matter of the protection of the rights and interests of citizens. The Czechoslovak Republic has in this way introduced for us a new kind of autonomy, giving even racial and religious minorities the opportunity of collaborating in the management of their own affairs, or indeed of settling the same themselves. Such collaboration or power of settlement will have a great importance for the solution of the problem of minorities generally (§ 133 of the Charter of the Constitution). We have often been asked whether we have not gone too far in our efforts at democratisation. It was necessary, however, to proceed energetically towards the reorganization of the administration as it was bequeathed to us by Austria. Much will depend on the maturity of our people which is now favourably influenced by the fact that all citizens may at last participate in the public administration.

The good quality of administration does not depend only on the good quality of juridical rules: in reality everything depends on the moral and intellectual qualities of those who are charged with the administration. Every state has to take measures which in this respect have a preventive or repressive effect. The most effective measure here is the duty imposed on a state official or on the State itself to make good any damage caused to a citizen through the illegal exercise of public power. In this regard our Republic has had in mind the examples especially of France and England, and has determined this question by special enactments, hoping thus to assure a just application of juridical rules for the benefit of all citizens generally and of minorities in particular. §§ 92 and 93 of the Constitutional Charter form the basis of these measures to which effect will be given as soon as conditions become normal again.

A special section (Part V) of the Charter of the Constitution is devoted to the so-called fundamental rights and liberties of citizens. The enumeration of them is much more

comprehensive than is usual in Constitutional Charters and emphasis has been given to certain matters the importance of which was manifest in former Austria. Privileges derived from sex, birth or calling are not recognized; private ownership is inviolable, § 109 of the Charter declaring that private ownership may be limited or abolished only by law, that is, not by any mere executive measure. All these rights guaranteed by the Constitution are protected, by the Supreme Administrative Court, a court which, in the technical sense, sees to the legality of the public administration when claims or complaints are advanced from any quarter. Our State is thus fitted out with all the attributes and means of a State based upon Right. That it is possible in certain cases to limit by an ordinary law the rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution or even, in circumstances of some extraordinary nature, to suspend these rights partially or completely, is nothing new. We meet with the same thing in other democratic republics.

Part VI of the Constitutional Charter deals with the protection of racial and religious minorities (section 2 of § 106 and § 122 of the Charter treat also of this matter). Our Constitution has adopted the stipulations of the Treaty of St. Germain relative hereto and has gone further than our international engagements require, in declaring §§ 131 and 132 of the Charter, as fundamental (constitutional) articles, though the Treaty of St. Germain in no way requires this. Here again our State desired to give a proof of its good will to settle the rights of minorities with perfect equity. This was also the case with regard to the provisions in the Constitution as to the use of languages where our scrupulous desire to fulfil our international engagements went so far as to cause us to adopt the very terminology of the conclusion of art IV of the Treaty of St. Germain, the Czechoslovak language being designated as the state, official language (*langue d'Etat, langue officielle*).

It is clear to every unbiased observer that the provisions

of the Constitution relating to language are permeated both in letter and in spirit with the idea of perfect justice. The view that the Treaty of St. Germain prohibits the limitation of the language rights of minorities to a certain percentage of those minorities or to a certain area, is not supported by the Treaty of St. Germain itself (art. 7, sect. IV). The Charter of the Constitution declares solemnly in its 134th paragraph that every species of forcible denationalisation is strictly forbidden.

To sum up, it may be said that the definitive Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic aims at being the democratic and just basis of public life in our State. It is a matter then, especially for our minorities, racial and religious, loyally to acknowledge these good traits and aims of our Constitution and to act accordingly.

